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In-depth evaluation of the programme on the law of the sea and ocean affairs

Note by the Secretary-General

In conformity with General Assembly resolutions 48/218 B of 29 July 1994 and 54/244 of 23 December 1999, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the programme on the law of the sea and ocean affairs. The report has been reviewed by the relevant departments and offices. The Secretary-General takes note of its findings and concurs with its recommendations.

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Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the programme on the law of the sea and ocean affairs

Summary

The present report reviews the work of the programme on the law of the sea and ocean affairs, implemented since 1992 by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs, with focus on the period 1998-2002. The Division promotes the universal acceptance of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and its implementing Agreements, provides secretariat services to the General Assembly and the Convention treaty system of institutions and assists Member States in deriving practical benefits from the international legal regime for the oceans.

Since 1992, the Division has effectively discharged the responsibilities of the Secretary-General under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Division's servicing of the General Assembly and its Consultative Process during their annual review of ocean affairs and the law of the sea has satisfied the users of services. Its administrative and technical support to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf and other treaty institutions has been useful and cost-effective.

The Division has played a useful role in promoting the universal acceptance of the Convention and the Agreements and their uniform application. The assistance it provides to international organizations to ensure that their legal instruments and agreements are developed in a manner consistent with the Convention has been appreciated by those organizations. To assist States in deriving practical benefits from the Convention, the Division has developed a range of information resources and has provided advisory services, training and fellowships. In particular, since 1995, the Train-Sea-Coast training programme has contributed to strengthening capacity in integrated coastal management at the national and regional levels.

Universal participation by Member States in the Convention is an important goal for the Division. To increase participation, the Division should ensure that it has the capacity to respond to requests of Member States for briefings and to promote greater awareness among policy makers of the practical economic benefits that can be derived from participating in the international legal regime for the oceans. The Division should develop its publications programme to cover topics in which States require assistance.

The Convention addresses all the problems of use of ocean space in an interrelated manner. Therefore, to be effective, the efforts of United Nations organizations assisting Member States in implementing the Convention need to be closely coordinated. The Division should be fully involved in the development of the new international coordination mechanism requested by the General Assembly in 2002. Considering the central role of regional cooperation in implementation issues, the Division should increase its participation in regional initiatives. Strengthened coordination should also provide the General Assembly with better information on the overall impact on the work of the competent organizations and options for necessary action to be taken.

The Division should review its capacity and range of skills necessary to perform its various functions taking into account its anticipated larger involvement in providing technical assistance and its role in inter-agency cooperation as highlighted by the General Assembly in 2002.

The report contains specific recommendations regarding the Division's promotion of universal acceptance of the Convention, its analysis of new developments in ocean affairs provided to the General Assembly and the scope of its programme of publications. It is recommended that the Division actively participate in establishing the new international coordination mechanism, further assist regional cooperation initiatives, strengthen consultations among the secretariats of the treaty system of institutions and conduct an assessment of the adequacy of its capacity and the range of expertise needed.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate and methodology

1. The Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) at its forty-first session recommended that the programme for the law of the sea and ocean affairs be the subject of in-depth evaluation with a report on the evaluation submitted to the Committee at its forty-third session in June 2003.[1]

2. The in-depth evaluation reviewed all the activities of the programme, focusing on the most recent medium-term plan periods, 1998-2001 and 2002-2005, and the plans' objectives. The programme is implemented by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs. The present report contains the evaluation findings on the secretariat services provided by the Division (sect. II); promotion by the Division of the universal acceptance of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the implementing Agreements, and their application (sect. III); and assistance provided by the Division to Member States to enable them to derive practical benefits from the international legal regime for the oceans (sect. IV).

3. In the conduct of the in-depth evaluation, the following categories of information were utilized by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS): (a) United Nations documents; (b) information from internal sources (the programme's internal assessments and internal working documents); (c) structured interviews with the staff of the programme and other Secretariat departments, representatives of the institutions established under the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea and other organizations of the United Nations system, and non-governmental organizations; (d) a survey of the views of Member States participating in the General Assembly open-ended, informal consultative process on oceans and the law of the sea, most of them being also parties to the Convention; and (e) a review of the professional literature on the Convention and related Agreements.

B. United Nations programme on the law of the sea and ocean affairs

1. International agreements

4. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (the Convention) was adopted in 1982 and entered into force, 12 years later, in 1994. Based on the understanding that "the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole", the purpose of the Convention is to establish "a legal order for the seas and oceans which will facilitate international communication, and will promote the peaceful uses of the seas and oceans, the equitable and efficient utilization of their resources, the conservation of their living resources, and the study, protection and preservation of the marine environment" (Convention preamble). The Implementing Agreement on deep seabed mining, adopted in 1994, and the Straddling Fish Stocks Agreement, which was adopted in 1995 and entered into force in December 2001, complete the United Nations law of the sea "package" as it stands at present.

5. The Convention codifies and develops the rules of international law of the sea and, as an umbrella treaty, establishes general principles to be implemented through

special regimes established in instruments developed by other bodies: it provides for stability in the law with possible adaptation and change. Currently nearly 500 treaties at the global and regional levels regulate major human activities at sea or affecting the sea. Recent instruments refer to the Convention as a basis for international action.

6. The major non-binding agreement adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992, known as Agenda 21, formulates a programme of action for sustainable development, including, in its chapter 17, the protection of the oceans, seas and coastal areas that is guided by the provisions of the Convention. Chapter 17 recommended that the General Assembly should provide for regular consideration, within the United Nations, at the intergovernmental level of general marine and coastal issues, including environment and development matters.

7. In 1994, the General Assembly decided to undertake an annual review and evaluation of the implementation of the Convention and other developments relating to the ocean affairs and the law of the sea. In 1999, the Assembly endorsed related recommendations of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its seventh session and decided to establish an open-ended informal consultative process on oceans and the law of the sea (the Consultative Process), consistent with the legal framework provided by the Convention and the goals of chapter 17 of Agenda 21. Integrating all legal, economic, social, environmental and other relevant aspects, the Consultative Process is meant to facilitate the annual review by the Assembly and to help it identify priority areas in ocean affairs and necessary actions to be taken. It is open to all stakeholders. In 2002, the Assembly noted the contribution of the Consultative Process to strengthening the Assembly's annual review and decided to continue the arrangement.

2. Secretariat arrangements

8. Since 1992, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (the Division) of the Office of Legal Affairs has carried out the functions entrusted to the Secretary-General as depositary of the Convention and a number of other functions assigned in various articles of the Convention, such as reporting to the States parties on issues of a general nature. Following the entry into force of the Convention in 1994, the Division has provided assistance to the treaty system of institutions. In 1994, the General Assembly requested the Division to implement an integrated programme on ocean affairs and the law of the sea. Its main objectives under the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005 are: (a) to promote universal acceptance of the Convention and the implementing Agreements; (b) to promote their uniform and consistent application; and (c) to facilitate States' efforts to derive practical benefits from the international legal regime for the oceans.

II. Secretariat services and assistance to the treaty system of institutions

A. Secretariat services

9. The Division provides secretariat services to the General Assembly, in particular in the preparation of the draft resolutions under its agenda item entitled

"Oceans and the law of the sea", to its Consultative Process, to the Meetings of States Parties to the Convention, to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (the Commission) and to the Informal Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 56/13 of 28 November 2001 and 57/143 of 12 December 2002. These services include organization of the sessions, preparation of documentation and provision of substantive meeting servicing. According to government representatives' responses to the OIOS survey on the work of the Division, the secretariat support provided by the Division is satisfactory. Regarding the General Assembly Consultative Process, the support provided requires the collaboration of the Division with a large number of competent agencies and programmes, including the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

1. Annual reports

10. Beginning in 1997, the Division has taken measures to make the comprehensive annual report on oceans and the law of the sea and the fisheries-related report mandated by the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly available at least a few weeks before the Assembly meetings on the related agenda item, which was not the case previously. With the establishment of the Consultative Process, which has held its annual meetings in the April-June period since 2000, the comprehensive annual report needs to be issued six to eight months earlier in the calendar year. The Division has generally been able to adjust to this new calendar.

11. The General Assembly considers that the comprehensive annual report plays a critical role and constitutes the basis for its annual review of all developments relating to ocean affairs and the law of the sea. Due to its mandated coverage, the length of the annual report increased from 74 pages, in 1998, to 137 pages, in 2002. Government representatives have discussed ways of streamlining its contents, but many still believe that if the length of the report were significantly reduced, it would lose its usefulness.

2. Meetings of States Parties

12. The Meetings of States Parties, which have been held since the entry into force of the Convention, have dealt primarily with elections of the members of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (the Tribunal) and the members of the Commission as well as with budgetary and administrative matters of the Tribunal. Some delegations have proposed that the States parties should consider the implementation of the Convention, while others believe that, to avoid duplication with the work of the General Assembly, the agenda of the Meetings should not be expanded. Eleven NGOs have been admitted to attend the Meetings, but only one, the Seaman's Church Institute, attended this forum in 2002. This raises the question of how to increase the participation by NGOs at the Meetings.

B. Administrative, technical and other services

1. Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

13. The Commission considers the data and other material submitted by coastal States concerning claims to outer limits of the continental shelf that may extend beyond 200 nautical miles. The preparation of submissions for the Commission is a

very complex task requiring significant resources, capacity and expertise to collect and analyse a large amount of data. To date, the Secretary-General has received one submission, from the Russian Federation in December 2001. Members of the subcommission elected to consider the submission of the Russian Federation were very satisfied with the technical support they received from the Division and its state-of-the-art technical equipment.

14. The Division played a positive role in encouraging submissions by States parties. It provided an outline of benefits accruing to States on making a submission and, as developing States raised concerns regarding the difficulty of complying with the time limit for submissions, it presented to the States parties options that addressed those concerns. Also, based on a five-day course outline prepared by the Commission, training courses have been organized in Brazil, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Malaysia. The Division was able to obtain funds to develop a comprehensive course manual requested by the Commission in 2002.

15. To support the work of the Commission, the General Assembly in 2000 established two trust funds, administered by the Division. One trust fund, to provide scientific and technical assistance to developing States, has received contributions of US$ 1 million and several applications have already been approved. The other trust fund, to help the members of the Commission from developing countries to attend its meetings, has recently received its first two contributions amounting to $114,000.

2. International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea

16. The entry into force of the Convention brought into operation its elaborate system of dispute settlement. Disputes can be submitted, at the request of any party to the dispute, to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (the Tribunal), the International Court of Justice or arbitration and conciliation procedures (ad hoc arbitral tribunals).

17. The General Assembly has underlined the important role and authority of the Tribunal concerning the interpretation and application of the Convention and the international seabed Agreement. Between 1997 and 2002, 11 cases had been entered in the Tribunal's list of cases, which involved mainly prompt release cases and requests for provisional measures, that is, provisional measures taken pending decision by another court or tribunal. No substantive cases have been submitted to its seabed, fisheries or environmental disputes chambers. One case concerning the sustainable exploitation of specific fish stocks has been submitted to a chamber specially formed by the Tribunal to deal with it. More information may be needed by parties to future cases on the interpretation or application of the Convention by the Tribunal, the International Court of Justice or arbitral tribunals. In this context, the Division decided to prepare a compendium of cases. It is a useful initiative which will facilitate a review of decisions made by the different jurisdictions.

18. The Division agreed to provide administrative services to the Tribunal and act as its liaison office in New York, with compensation for the costs involved. The agreement includes exchange of information and publications between the United Nations and the Tribunal as well as administration by the Division of the trust fund to assist States in the settlement of disputes through the Tribunal. No application for financial assistance from the trust fund has yet been submitted. Officials of the Tribunal stated to OIOS that they appreciate the relationship with the Division not

only for the services it provides, but also for the information provided which keeps them up to date with new developments relevant to the law of the sea. They believe that information flow between the two entities and other organizations can be strengthened and that an increased number of regular joint meetings would be useful.

3. International Seabed Authority

19. The International Seabed Authority (the Authority) is an autonomous international organization established to organize and control all mineral-related activities in the international seabed area (the Area). As spelled out in the Convention, resources in the Area are vested in mankind as a whole. The Authority also has a role in protecting the environment of ecosystems.

20. The Authority and the United Nations agreed, among other things, to consult each other regarding their respective responsibilities under the Convention and the implementing Agreement; to exchange material and information of mutual interest which are not subject to confidentiality provisions; and to achieve effective coordination of their technical assistance activities.

21. Consultations between the Authority and the Division have addressed mostly administrative matters. The Authority and the Division have also closely collaborated to develop the Authority's data repository. However, studies on issues of common interest to the Area and to areas under national jurisdiction or new developments that might impact on the implementation of the Convention and the Agreement have not been the subject of periodic substantive consultations and increased collaboration.

III. Universal acceptance of the Convention and the Agreements, and their consistent application

A. Promotion of universal acceptance

1. Progress towards universal participation

22. The Convention was elaborated to achieve a universally acceptable set of principles and norms that would govern all uses and resources of the oceans. In 1993, 60 States had ratified the Convention. By 1997, this number has risen to 123 States and to 141 by 2002. The States which have not yet ratified the Convention include a number of important States in terms of their use of ocean space. The rapid increase in ratifications from 1993 to 1997 is attributed to the entry into force of the Convention and the adoption of the Implementing Agreement on the international seabed, in 1994.

23. The goal of universal ratification is a key objective for the Secretariat. In 1990, in pointing to aspects of the deep seabed mining provisions of the Convention which had prevented some States from ratifying it, the Secretary-General took the initiative to convene informal consultations which led to the 1994 implementing Agreement. Since the entry into force of the Convention, the Secretariat has not launched any major high-level effort aimed at achieving universal participation in the Convention.

24. Continued promotion of participation to the Convention is carried out by the Division in the course of special events such as the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Convention, in December 2002, and at national workshops organized at the invitation of Governments. Briefings such as the first joint briefing of the Division and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) organized in 2002 on developments in ocean affairs and the law of the sea are also useful in promoting participation. A number of delegates attending the briefing stated that such events should be organized in their capital, or at the regional level, and that the Division should prepare an assistance package to raise the level of expertise of national policy makers on the regime established by the Convention. UNITAR informed OIOS that it would continue the collaboration with the Division, including the joint organization of regional courses, should funding permit it. Government representatives of countries engaged in the ratification process stated to OIOS that the Division should have the means to brief government entities or their legislative organs, upon request.

2. Dissemination of information

25. Publications and other information material prepared by the Division are used to assist States in implementing the legal regime for the oceans (see sect. IV below). Information is also disseminated in collaboration with the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat and other entities to raise general awareness of the legal regime. An examination of news agencies' stories on the law of the sea indicates that this aspect of the work of the Organization reported in the media does not receive the same attention as do other legal frameworks related to the issues of sustainable development. This is an issue that relevant United Nations programmes need to address.

3. Information on the benefits from participation in the international legal regime

26. The more recent comprehensive survey by the Secretariat, in the early 1990s, of the needs of States to develop and manage their resources for the realization of benefits under the Convention reported that a large number of States were not able to realize the expected benefits. An initial impediment was the general lack of awareness, both at the national planning and policy-making levels and at managerial levels, of the potential for greater use of ocean space provided under the Convention, and its prospective contribution to their socio-economic development.

27. During the 1990s, topics related to economic aspects of ocean affairs were frequently discussed in various forums. However, no publication or report analysed the economic benefits that could be expected from participation in the legal regime for the oceans or illustrated such benefits through the presentation of case studies. Similarly, this aspect is not discussed comprehensively in the different reports submitted to the General Assembly. Greater attention by the Division, similar to that devoted in other domains to economic instruments or ways to generate revenues to better equip States to implement international agreements, could help promote greater acceptance of the international legal regime for the oceans. It is a task that the Division can undertake, in collaboration with other organizations, since the Secretariat capacity to deal with ocean economics was integrated to the Division. *The Office of Legal Affairs in its comments on an earlier draft of the present report stated that the term ocean economics no longer applies. Following UNCED in 1992, the tendency has been to deal with issues of ocean affairs more in terms of*

sustainable development. OIOS understands that the practice of sustainable development implies the integration of environmental, social and economic aspects and considers that the United Nations needs to provide more information on the economic aspects of ocean affairs.

B. Uniform and consistent application of the Convention and the Agreements

28. Coherence and uniformity of substance in the application of the legal regime is another important goal of the Division. In this regard, it should be noted that the Convention prohibits reservations that would modify the legal effect of provisions in their application to a State.

1. Assistance to international organizations

29. As a first step towards maintaining coherence and uniformity, the Division provides advice and assistance to intergovernmental organizations and monitors their work to ensure that the rules contained in the Convention are uniformly implemented. Such assistance is particularly important during the development of new agreements, as was the case during the drafting of the Underwater Cultural Heritage Convention under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), adopted in 2001. Officials in other organizations stated to OIOS that Division staff are regarded as experts who can provide clarifications on specific clauses of the Convention.

30. Remedies to issues approached from a technical perspective, such as the work of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on the over-exploitation of fish stocks, which may disturb the legal balance between freedom and control that exists in the Convention, call for ongoing legal analysis and clarification. Also, intergovernmental cooperation may raise legal questions, such as reconciling environmental boundaries with administrative or political boundaries. Such issues of implementation are frequently raised in the context of regional agreements. Assistance is sometimes provided by the Division during negotiations among member States of a regional group (see para. 41 below). There is also a need to advise regional seas programmes that have only an action plan but no lega. instrument or, more generally, United Nations programmes involved in regional activities, such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The Meeting of Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, in 1999, recommended that competent organizations, including the Division, should hold regular meetings of technical and legal experts to ensure a consistent approach on specific issues of common concern, including trade, marine protected areas, land-based sources of pollution and others. The Division was unable to send a representative to all the biennial meetings of regional seas conventions and action plans or to other meetings on regional issues. The increased participation of the Division in regional consultations is needed. It should be recalled that the Consultative Process, in 2002, underlined the central role of regional cooperation in achieving integrated ocean management.

2. State practice

31. Under the Convention, there are several sources of international standards, rules and regulations creating obligations for States parties. The Division considers that studying the existing legal and regulatory practice of States and disseminating such information is one practical way to assist Member States in consistently applying the Convention.

32. No comprehensive information on implementation by parties is reported to the Secretariat, as might be the case under other instruments. To find out about State practice, the Division has, every four to five years, sent to Member States questionnaires on the implementation of the Convention. In 2002, only 23 States had responded to the questionnaire. This low response rate is a problem common to many United Nations programmes. To supplement the information received, the Division is using information gathered by other competent organizations for other purposes, which still leaves a gap in terms of coverage of the surveys and their quality. In spite of these shortcomings, government representatives stated to OIOS that the information available through the Division's databases is the most comprehensive and authoritative available.

33. Coastal States are required to deposit with the Secretary-General charts showing, inter alia, baselines, delimitation of maritime zones or lists of geographical coordinates and to give due publicity to them. By 2002, only 24 States had fully or partially complied with their obligations. The Division has established facilities for the custody of the information deposited and for its dissemination to assist States with their publicity obligations. It has also established a geographic information system to store and process geographic information and produce custom-tailored cartographic outputs. The system helps to identify any inconsistencies in the information submitted. Among different issues of compliance with the Convention, it is noted that, since the Convention's adoption, 16 States have abandoned their claims for territorial seas in excess of the 12-nautical-mile limit; less than 10 States still claim territorial seas in excess of the 12-mile limit.

3. Analysis of new developments

34. The comprehensive annual report prepared by the Division (see paras. 10-11 above) is one of the main contributions of the Secretariat to the General Assembly's annual review of developments relating to ocean affairs and the law of sea. The report has provided regular updates of actions taken to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities (IUU fishing) on the high seas, assessments of the success of these actions as well as issues of implementation. The Consultative Process has emphasized some of these issues, which the General Assembly has included in its annual resolutions under its agenda item entitled "Oceans and the law of the sea".

35. Most government representatives who responded to the OIOS survey find the documentation provided by the Division useful. A few of them stated that the documentation could be more analytical, in particular the comprehensive annual report. Officials in organizations interviewed by OIOS stated that the Division is very effective in summarizing the information they provide to fit the format of the report. They also believe that, as the Division is the central entity reviewing their inputs, it is well placed to provide additional analysis that would present assessments of overall progress and suggestions for future actions. The additional

analysis the Division would generate, particularly for cross-cutting issues, would entail a more developed process of consultation among organizations. OIOS believes that such effort would serve well the purpose of the annual report, which is to synthesize above all "the relevant aspects of oceans and seas, including the political, legal, economic, social, environmental, scientific and technical" (A/55/61, para. 10).

IV. Assistance

36. The Division is expected to provide assistance to States to strengthen their institutional infrastructure as well as human, financial and technical resources so that they can exercise their rights and fulfil their obligations under the legal regime for the oceans. Assistance is provided by making information available, through publications, reference collection, databases and the Internet, and by providing advisory services, training and fellowships. (For assistance provided to international organizations, see paras. 29-30 above.)

A. Information

1. Publications

37. Through its publications, the Division provides samples of national legislation, handbooks on technical aspects of implementation of the Convention and legislative histories of selected provisions of the Convention. Most government representatives surveyed by OIOS found the publications useful, with special mention of the *Law of the Sea Bulletin*, which is issued three times per year and reports on the current status of the Convention and related Agreements, and presents complete texts of declarations of States, relevant national legislation, and decisions related to the Convention.

38. The Division does not conduct surveys of the users of its publications to determine their needs. A publication on settlement of disputes is planned for the current biennium. Several topics for which States require assistance as identified in Division work plans, such as crimes at sea, navigation and sustainable development, are not adequately covered by the publications. A number of topics fall under the mandates of other organizations. Collaboration between the Division and these organizations to produce publications on these topics would be beneficial.

2. Reference collections, databases and web sites

39. The Division maintains an extensive reference collection dealing with oceans and law of the sea matters and provides library services to United Nations staff, delegates, researchers and NGOs. The reference centre handled 400 external and 500 internal queries in 2001. The Division also has developed extensive databases containing national legislation and delimitation treaties and maintains a geographical information system database (see para. 33 above). Information is extracted from these databases to assist States in adopting national legislation and delineating their maritime zones. Furthermore, the Division contributes relevant bibliographic data and abstracts to the international Aquatic Science and Fisheries Abstract (ASFA) used, inter alia, by marine scientists, fisheries managers and international lawyers.

40. The General Assembly in resolution 49/28 of 6 December 1994 had requested the Division to develop a "centralized system with integrated database for providing coordinated information and advice". This task has been greatly facilitated since the mid-1990s by the rapid advance of Internet technology: the Division and key agencies responded to the request by developing their respective web sites with cross-links among each other. The Division has provided such links since the inception of its web site in 1996 and has gradually made its databases available on the site subject to confidentiality provisions. Recently the web site system has benefited from added functionalities and access to relevant documents available on the United Nations Official Document System and to the United Nations Atlas of the Oceans. The Atlas of the Oceans, launched in 2002, is the first attempt to fully integrate internal databases available at all relevant agencies and the Division is one of the 29 editors. The Atlas covers some 1,040 topics on the oceans.

B. Advisory services and training

1. Advisory services

41. The Division provides advice in response to queries from individual Member States that sometimes require missions to the field. The Division does not participate in the drafting of national legislation. It does, however, provide assistance for the purpose of facilitating negotiations among several States. For example, in 2001, at the request of UNEP, and in connection with negotiations for the proposed regional seas programme for the North-East Pacific, the Division provided advice to three States on the legal framework for the protection and preservation of the marine environment in the subregion. Also, in 2002, the Division participated, at the request of participating States, in the preparatory committee which established the rules of the Conference on Maritime Delimitation in the Caribbean. The Division provided assistance to the first meeting of the Conference and will continue to do so in such matters as designing a geographic database, creating illustrative maps, providing a database on relevant legislation and maintaining a roster of experts in hydrography and geodesy.

2. Training and fellowships

42. In 1993, in consultation with other United Nations organizations, the Division developed an action plan for human resources development and capacity-building for the planning and management of coastal and marine areas. The main component of the plan became the Division's Train-Sea-Coast programme, launched in 1995 with funding from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The goal of the programme is to create capacity at the national level to develop and deliver training courses that meet the programme's quality standards and address local needs through a network of centres. Between 1995 and 1999, a network of six centres trained over 600 people in integrated coastal management.

43. Since 2000 the Train-Sea-Coast programme has received funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which supported the establishment of six additional training units at the regional level. GEF is one of very few financial mechanisms available to support integrated planning in multinational water bodies. GEF projects have contributed to the formulation of new policies, laws and regulations related to the international waters. Under the GEF framework, the Train-

Sea-Coast programme addressed critical issues affecting semi-enclosed seas in different regional settings.

44. In 2002, a tripartite review of the Train-Sea-Coast programme by the Division, UNDP and the United Nations Office for Project Services concluded that a number of centres were underperforming in terms of course development. It was recommended that only those centres should be maintained which could deliver courses of interest to the various GEF projects, networking among the centres should be strengthened and steps should be taken to promote sustainability of the training units. The tripartite review recommended further development of the Train-Sea-Coast programme through a second GEF project phase. Currently the programme is developing courses on such issues as ship ballast, at the request of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and sewage management for the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA), jointly with these two organizations. Officials of FAO, IMO, GPA and UNDP stated to OIOS that the programme should continue and be expanded. It should be noted that in 2002 the General Assembly invited Member States and "others in a position to do so to support the training activities of the Train-Sea-Coast programme of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea" (resolution 57/141, para. 70). Taking into consideration the expected increase in its responsibilities (see sect. V below), the Division should make a decision on the nature of its participation in such joint programmes, whether it will continue to play a lead role in developing courses for ocean management or will focus on legal aspects only.

45. The Division administers the Hamilton Shirley Amerasinghe Memorial Fellowship Programme on the Law of the Sea, established in 1982 with the joint participation of universities and institutions which provide free tuition to the fellows. The programme is intended to improve the expertise of government officials or academics involved in the law of the sea or marine affairs. Out of the 100 applications received on average, one to two fellowships are awarded each year by an advisory panel. Since the programme was established, fellows have been selected from all the regions in the world. The cumulative effect of these fellowships is small compared to those of other United Nations fellow programmes, which may include up to 20 fellows each year. However, the Division has taken steps to launch another project, entitled Ocean Policy and Human Resources Development, which will also provide academic internship programmes for mid-level ocean affairs administrators. The project, funded by the Nippon Foundation, will provide internships and academic training to 20 candidates, each year, over a 5-year period.

C. Inter-agency coordination

46. With the adoption of Agenda 21 in 1992 and the entry into force of the Convention, in 1994, issues of implementation of the Convention and coordination of international action became more pressing. The Division participated in an inter-agency mechanism, the Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas (SOCA) of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). SOCA was established in 1993 to monitor and review progress in the implementation of chapter 17 of Agenda 21 and support the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. In 2000, the General Assembly requested more effective coordination and steps were taken by the participating agencies to strengthen SOCA. However, as a result of the

streamlining of the ACC machinery, all subsidiary bodies, including SOCA, were abolished in December 2001. At the end of 2002, the General Assembly, convinced of the need to improve cooperation and coordination at both intergovernmental and inter-agency levels, invited the Secretary-General to establish an effective, transparent and regular inter-agency coordination mechanism on oceans and coastal issues within the United Nations system. In its request the Assembly endorsed the recommendations of the Consultative Process and the decisions of the World Summit on Sustainable Development made earlier in the year.

47. Based on the experience of SOCA, officials of the SOCA participating organizations stated to OIOS that the new mechanism should be task-oriented. Periodic meetings of all participating agencies would still be needed and could take place back to back with other meetings. Issues of interest should be as inclusive as the coverage of ocean affairs by the General Assembly and, in order to provide the continuity and follow-up necessary, Secretariat resources should be identified to support its work.

V. Scope of the role of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea

48. At the end of the 1980s, a number of activities dealing with economic and technical aspects of ocean affairs and the corresponding staff resources were integrated into the programme on the law of the sea and ocean affairs. Over the years, the number of officers in the Division with backgrounds other than in legal areas was gradually reduced. Also, the number of posts deployed to the programme was reduced from 57 posts, during the biennium 1990-1991, to 27 posts for 2002-2003. Among different factors, this reduction was explained by the completion of the work of the Preparatory Commission for the International Seabed Authority and for the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in 1995, to which support was no longer needed. In 1999, the General Assembly requested that support to the Consultative Process be provided by the Division in collaboration with other parts of the Secretariat, including the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs was unable to assign staff, full time, to provide support. As what follows indicates, the various functions of the Division require it to address issues that demand more than legal expertise:

(a) The Division is servicing the General Assembly, which reviews in an integrated manner all aspects of ocean affairs. Staff of the Division need to interact with the competent organizations and prepare documents and proposals that address other aspects of ocean affairs than purely legal ones;

(b) The Division is requested to assist Member States in developing their institutional infrastructure and their human, technical and financial resources. While the Division has focused its assistance on the legal aspects of implementation of the Convention, the integrated approach to ocean affairs embodied in the Convention also has generated requests related to marine policy and management requirements. The General Assembly has requested the Secretary-General to identify additional sources of support in implementing the Convention and in ensuring appropriate responses to requests of States for advice and assistance. Such a clearinghouse function requires familiarity with the subject content and methods used in different domains;

(c) The General Assembly in 2002 underscored the expected growing involvement of the Division with requests for technical assistance from States and its role in inter-agency coordination and cooperation.

The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea draws from the specialized expertise that exists in different United Nations programmes. However, to be the effective integrated programme on ocean affairs and the law of the sea that the General Assembly envisaged, it should review its staff requirements, including the mix of skills needed to perform adequately its assigned responsibilities.

49. Being mindful of the Secretariat goal of establishing gender parity among professionals, the Division has almost reached this goal. Also, it should be noted that two thirds of Division posts at the P-5 level and above are encumbered by women.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

50. **Since its establishment in 1992, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea has discharged effectively the responsibilities of the Secretary-General under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. In particular, administrative support provided by the Division to treaty institutions has been useful and cost-effective and its technical support to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf has facilitated the work of the Commission. Its servicing of the General Assembly and its Consultative Process during their annual review and evaluation of the implementation of the Convention and other developments relating to ocean affairs has satisfied the users of the services. The comprehensive annual report prepared by the Division plays a critical role in the General Assembly's annual review.**

51. **One of the main objectives of the Division is to promote the uniform and consistent application of the Convention and its Agreements by international organizations and Member States. The Division ensured that international organizations assessed the impact of the entry into force of the Convention on other instruments and programmes. Since 1994, the continuous assistance provided by the Division to these organizations in the development of instruments and agreements related to the law of the sea has been appreciated. Its efforts to study the application of the Convention by States have been constrained by the small number of States responding to surveys, but it was able to supplement the information received with information available to other competent organizations.**

52. **An important goal of the Division is to promote universal acceptance of the Convention. The pace of ratification of the Convention increased during the period 1992-1997 but, as of early 2003, 50 States have not yet ratified the Convention. The Division played a useful role in promoting acceptance of the Convention. However, at this moment, the Division should ensure that it has the capacity to respond to all requests for briefing delegations and Member States, agencies and legislative organs and to promote greater awareness among national policy makers of the practical economic benefits that can be expected from participation in the Convention.**

53. The Division is expected to assist States in deriving practical benefits from the Convention and in fulfilling their obligations under it. Assistance is provided by the Division through a range of information resources, advisory services, training and fellowships. The Train-Sea-Coast training programme is the Division's main training component. It has contributed to building capacity at the national and regional levels in integrated coastal management. The future orientation of the programme and its potential to build capacity that directly supports implementation of the Convention needs to be examined by the Division. The impact of fellowships and other training has not been significant due to the limited funds mobilized for these activities. The Division is currently identifying new sources of funding. The usefulness of the Division's information resources would be enhanced if its future programme of publications covered more systematically the topics for which States require assistance, as identified in the Division's work programme, and if the needs of the users of publications were regularly assessed.

54. The Division must ensure that the implementation of the Convention by international organizations and States, as well as the annual reviews of implementation by the General Assembly, take into account all aspects of ocean affairs in an integrated manner. This objective requires strengthening international coordination and increased participation of the Division in regional cooperation mechanisms. The inter-agency Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas (SOCA) was abolished in 2001. The Division and other former members of SOCA should apply lessons learned from the experience of SOCA in developing the new inter-agency mechanism requested by the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the General Assembly in 2002. One of the goals of strengthened coordination should be ultimately to provide to the General Assembly and other relevant intergovernmental bodies a more systematic analysis of the overall impact of the work of the competent organizations and options for necessary action to be taken. This analysis needs to be carried out with direct participation of the agencies and programmes concerned. Considering the central role regional cooperation is playing in addressing issues of implementation of the Convention, the Division should make it a priority to participate in the relevant regional meetings it is invited to attend and follow up with required advice and legal and technical studies. Another aspect of cooperation includes the interactions among the treaty system of institutions. At this point of their development, it would be useful for the secretariats of the treaty institutions to meet periodically to discuss substantive issues of common interest.

55. As requested by the General Assembly, the Division is implementing an integrated programme on ocean affairs and the law of the sea, consistent with the multidisciplinary requirements for the promotion and proper implementation of the Convention. Throughout the 1990s, the work of the programme became increasingly focused on support for the legal implementation of the Convention. Considering the growing demand for technical assistance from States, which involve addressing in a coherent manner legal aspects of implementation of the Convention, issues of marine policy and management requirements, as well as the increasing importance of inter-agency coordination and cooperation, the Division should regularly assess the adequacy of its capacity to carry out its various mandates effectively. In

reviewing its capacity to implement effectively its integrated programme on ocean affairs and the law of the sea, the Division should take due account of the specialized expertise that exists throughout the United Nations system, as it currently does to support the work of the General Assembly on ocean affairs and its review of new developments from the economic, environmental and social perspectives. It is expected that the strengthening of coordination envisaged in paragraph 54 above will facilitate the more effective utilization of expertise and resources available in the different competent organizations to respond to requests of Member States for assistance.

Recommendation 1
Consultations among secretariats of the treaty system of institutions

To better address issues of common interest, the secretariats of the treaty system of institutions should hold periodic informal consultations on substantive issues which affect utilization of their institutions or which may require their joint examination and further legal or scientific studies. The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea will participate in these consultations, having due regard to its status as an international judicial body. For cost-effectiveness, these consultations can be held back to back with Meetings of States Parties (see paras. 18 and 21 above).

Recommendation 2
Universal acceptance of the Convention and the Agreements

In promoting universal acceptance of the Convention and the Agreements:

(a) **The Division should brief, upon request, government entities and legislative organs of countries engaged in the process of ratification of the Convention and/or the Agreements;**

(b) **To raise awareness among the national policy makers of the benefits from participation in the international legal regime for the oceans, the Division should disseminate information on the potential economic benefits and their contribution to socio-economic development, through case studies or prospective analysis (see paras. 24, 26-27 above).**

Recommendation 3
Regional cooperation

Considering the central role of regional cooperation to ensure consistent application of the Convention and implementation of integrated ocean management:

(a) **The Division should participate actively in the biennial meetings of regional seas conventions and action plans, and other relevant regional meetings;**

(b) **In collaboration with the competent international organizations, the Division should ensure that the implementation of regional or subregional initiatives is not hampered by lack of legal information or capacity to implement the international legal regime (see paras. 30, 41 and 43 above).**

Recommendation 4
Analysis of new developments

To enhance support to the General Assembly in its identification of priority areas in ocean affairs and necessary actions to be taken, the Division should further synthesize the information received from the competent organizations presented in its comprehensive annual report on oceans and the law of the sea. The annual report should include assessments of the overall impact of the efforts of the competent organizations and suggestions for future activities. This additional analysis should be prepared in collaboration with the different contributing organizations, in the context of the new inter-agency coordinating mechanism on oceans and coastal areas recommended by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/141 of 12 December 2002, with due regard for the expertise of those organizations and the responsibilities of their governing bodies (see paras. 11, 34-35 above).

Recommendation 5
Publications of the Division

To better target its publications and to increase their usefulness, the Division should assess the needs of its readership. It should also review its publications programme to ensure that it provides adequate coverage of topics and issues, as identified in its work plans, for which States require assistance. Where specific gaps are identified in the publications programme, the Division should update existing publications or develop new ones as necessary. Whenever relevant, this should be done in collaboration with the competent specialized agency to ensure that there is no duplication and to explore cost-sharing arrangements (see paras. 17, 37-38 above).

Recommendation 6
Inter-agency coordinating mechanism

The new inter-agency coordinating mechanism on oceans and coastal areas, called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/141, should be task-oriented and involve representatives of all relevant United Nations agencies and programmes. Its coverage of issues should be as inclusive as the coverage of ocean affairs and the law of the sea by the General Assembly (see paras. 46-47 above).

Recommendation 7
Review of capacity

In implementing its integrated programme on ocean affairs and the law of the sea and in view of the growing demand for technical assistance from States, the Division should ensure that it maintains its capacity to fulfil its different responsibilities. In reviewing its capacity to implement its integrated programme, the Division should take due account of the specialized expertise

that exists throughout the United Nations system. Regarding activities that have been given insufficient attention, such as the dissemination of information on the economic aspects of ocean affairs, the Division should have the capacity to promote more systematically the work done in the United Nations system (see paras. 14-15, 24, 27, 30, 41, 44-46, 48 above).

(*Signed*) Dileep **Nair**
Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/56/16), para. 407.

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Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Programme questions: evaluation

Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its fortieth session on the in-depth evaluation of global development trends, issues and policies, global approaches to social and microeconomic issues and policies, and the corresponding subprogrammes in the regional commissions

Note by the Secretary-General

In conformity with General Assembly resolutions 48/218 B of 29 July 1994 and 54/244 of 23 December 1999, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its fortieth session on the in-depth evaluation of global development trends, issues and policies, global approaches to social and microeconomic issues and policies, and the corresponding subprogrammes in the regional commissions (E/AC.51/2000/2). The report has been reviewed by the relevant departments and offices. The Secretary-General takes note of its findings and concurs with its recommendation.

* E/AC.51/2003/1.

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Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its fortieth session on the in-depth evaluation of global development trends, issues and policies, global approaches to social and microeconomic issues and policies, and the corresponding subprogrammes in the regional commissions

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) at its twenty-second session to review the implementation of its recommendations three years after taking decisions on an in-depth evaluation.

The subprogrammes reviewed in the 2000 in-depth evaluation are responsible for the analysis of socio-economic development trends carried out within the United Nations by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions. That analysis is submitted to the intergovernmental bodies requesting it and is published in flagship reports such as the *World Economic and Social Survey* and the regional surveys.

As recommended by CPC, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions have continued to improve the quality and presentation of these reports to ensure that their main findings and policy proposals can more easily reach government officials and the specialized public. The programmes concerned have more systematically applied good practices that are increasing the dissemination of their analyses, such as the timely release of publications, more targeted distribution and special briefings to government officials and the press.

The interaction between analytical and technical cooperation activities has strengthened the analytical content of the economic and social surveys. Due to resource constraints, this interaction has been limited to the few cases where it could be built into existing projects. It is hoped that greater interaction will be facilitated by the 2003 reorganization of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which is based on a model of increased reliance on the collective competencies of the Department. Additional steps to strengthen the analytical content of the surveys should include more sustained exchange of information and ideas among the Department and the regional commissions.

Most of the analysis done by the Department and the regional commissions is based on short-term outlooks or medium-term perspectives. More attention to long-term trends to facilitate the understanding of current circumstances that may have an impact on long-term development prospects would be an important contribution towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

CPC recommended in 2000 that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs take measures to review its capacity to carry out in a better manner its analysis of socio-economic development trends. The Department proceeded in early

2003 with a reorganization of its structure, which is meant, among other things, to strengthen and raise the visibility of its analysis. In this regard, it is recommended that the results of the 2003 reorganization be assessed by the Department at the end of 2005 and reported on in the context of the programme performance report for the biennium 2004-2005.

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I. Introduction

1. At its fortieth session, in 2000, the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of global development trends, issues and policies, global approaches to social and microeconomic issues and policies, and the corresponding subprogrammes in the regional commissions (E/AC.51/2000/2). In addition to endorsing the recommendations of the evaluation report, the Committee recommended that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs take measures to review its capacity to carry out in a better manner the analysis of socio-economic development trends.[1]

2. The present report contains the findings of the triennial review conducted to determine the extent to which the CPC recommendations made three years ago have been implemented. The status of implementation of the various recommendations is discussed in section II below, under four distinct headings.

3. The subprogrammes responsible for the analysis of socio-economic development trends (the subject of the evaluation) are implemented at the global level by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and at the regional level by the regional commissions. The triennial review is based on (a) the information provided by the Department and the regional commissions on progress made in implementing the CPC recommendations, a process that is monitored twice a year by the Office of Internal Oversight Services; (b) the review in early 2003 of the relevant documentation and comments submitted by the Department, the regional commissions and experts in other organizations using United Nations analyses in preparation for the triennial review; and (c) consultations with staff of the Department and of the regional commissions. A draft of the report was made available to the Department and the regional commissions for review. Their comments are identified in the present report by the use of italics.

II. Findings

A. Enhancing the content of global socio-economic analysis

Recommendation 1
Contribution of the *World Economic and Social Survey* to intergovernmental processes

(a) The *World Economic and Social Survey* should be more concise, highlight action-oriented findings and present clear policy proposals based on them. The *Survey* issued in the year 2001 should incorporate an executive summary containing the findings and policy proposals of part II of the *Survey*;

(b) In liaison with other parts of the Secretariat, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs should identify a wider range of government officials to whom the contents of the *Survey* would be of interest and should take the necessary steps to ensure that the *Survey*, in print or electronic version, either in its entirety or only the relevant sections, reaches them.

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 16 and corrigenda* (A/55/16 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. II, sect. C, para. 244.

4. Each year an important issue of the world economy is discussed in part II of the *World Economic and Social Survey*. Since 2001, in accordance with recommendation 1 (a), part II of the *Survey* has been introduced by an executive summary containing the main findings and policy proposals developed in the discussion that follows.

5. The Development Policy Analysis Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs introduced this improvement, among a few others made to the content and presentation of the *Survey*. These improvements are expected to facilitate the use by intergovernmental bodies of the analysis presented in the *Survey*. Although direct evidence of the use of the analysis is rarely documented (for example, there were only three direct references to the *Survey* in the general debate of the Second Committee of General Assembly in 1998, and again in 2001), in its 2000 review of the use of the *Survey*, the Office of Internal Oversight Services found that it is used by delegates to the General Assembly for reference, and CPC stressed that "the value of the *World Economic and Social Survey* as a reference tool should be preserved".[2] Also, as reported in the 2000 in-depth evaluation, the General Assembly considered that since 1998 the analysis produced by the Development Policy Analysis Division had provided constructive inputs to its work on the question of financing for development.

6. Media coverage of the *Survey*, and related publications such as the *World Economic Situation and Prospects*, which is released at the beginning of the year, provides another indirect indication of the increased dissemination, and possible greater influence, of the analysis they contain. The Department of Public Information monitoring of press coverage shows that the number of articles on these publications has increased and, more importantly, that the substantive content of the articles has improved. Also, since 2001 authors of the *Survey* have been interviewed on influential cable-television networks covering business and finance issues. Department of Public Information officers believe that one of the reasons for this improved coverage is the more focused analysis of issues and presentation of findings achieved since 1999.

7. To reach a wider range of government officials (an issue addressed in recommendation 1 (b)), the Development Policy Analysis Division began to expand its mailing list for the *Survey*, using mailing lists maintained by other relevant units in the Secretariat. Also, the Division added all central banks to the distribution list for the *Survey* (see para. 24 below). The Office of Internal Oversight Services considers that recommendations 1 (a) and 1 (b) were meaningfully implemented by the Division.

8. Although recommendations 1 through 4 apply primarily to the global programme implemented by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, regional commissions considered that these recommendations provided useful criteria for asserting the value of their own activities. For example, regarding the contribution to intergovernmental processes, addressed in recommendation 1, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) stated that it was striving to make its annual *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific* more concise and to give greater emphasis in it to the analysis of alternative policy options facing ESCAP member Governments.

[2] Ibid., para. 243, recommendation 1.

Recommendation 2
Assessing long-term trends in the global economy

To facilitate intergovernmental discussion on policies conducive to long-term development, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs should strengthen its analysis of long-term trends in the global economy using a variety of methodological approaches and it should further integrate this dimension into its reporting to intergovernmental bodies.

9. The Development Policy Analysis Division had been preparing economic studies mostly on the basis of short-term outlooks or medium-term perspectives, and appeared to neglect the study of long-term trends (that is, beyond a 4-year to 6-year perspective), a situation that recommendation 2 was intended to remedy. In its implementation plan for the CPC recommendations, the Division stated that, to provide more long-term perspectives, it would whenever possible draw attention to current circumstances that could have an impact on long-term development prospects. For example, the 2001 *Survey* discussed the repercussions that vulnerable groups may experience in the medium to long run when a downturn in the economy is brought about by an unexpected shock. The Office of Internal Oversight Services considers recommendation 2 to be partially implemented.

10. The Millennium Development Goals invite the international community to assume a medium- to long-term perspective on economic and social development. In this context, it is important for the economic analysis of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to serve as a source for understanding long-term trends. The Department is attempting to strengthen this aspect of its economic analysis and has created, as part of its 2003 reorganization, the Development Policy and Planning Office, which is responsible, in particular, for examining long-term global development perspectives (see para. 35 (b) below).

Recommendation 3
Linkages between political and economic issues and policies

After intergovernmental agreement on a methodology for assessing the impact of sanctions on third States, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Political Affairs should review the required activities and capacity needed within the Secretariat. The review should be the basis for proposals presented to the relevant intergovernmental bodies as part of the revision to the medium-term plan.

11. The involvement of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in assessing the economic impact of sanctions arose from the recognition by the General Assembly, in its resolution 47/120 B, that in the conditions of economic interdependence that existed at that time the implementation of preventive or enforcement measures under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations against any State continued to create special economic problems for certain other States. The preparation of the reports requested by the General Assembly on this matter has been carried out within the arrangements for interdepartmental cooperation, which were adopted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 50/51, utilizing existing capacity in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs and the Office of Legal Affairs. Since 2000 the Secretariat has not been mandated to assume major new functions to address the issue of the impact of sanctions on third States. As a result, the review of activities

and capacity needed within the Secretariat, as envisaged in recommendation 3, has not been required. In his last report on the matter, the Secretary-General stated that the existing arrangements for interdepartmental cooperation "did not preclude further cooperation between the relevant departments, as appropriate", and that the setting in motion of functions contemplated in General Assembly resolution 50/51 "was dependent on a request either by the Security Council or by interested Member States".[3]

Recommendation 4
Analytical functions and operational activities at the Department of Economic and Social Affairs

To correct the inadequate interaction between research and operational activities under subprogramme 28.7, Global development trends, issues and policies, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs should plan a number of joint activities between the professional staff assigned under subprogramme 28.7 and those involved in technical assistance under subprogrammes 28.3 and 28.8. Resources permitting, appropriate activities could include joint participation in the analysis of developments in national economies and joint participation in needs assessment missions.

12. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs informed the Office of Internal Oversight Services in 2001 that the implementation of recommendation 4 would be pursued in the context of the management review of the Department's technical cooperation programme, scheduled to take place at the end of that year. In the course of that review, the evaluation of the impact of the Department's technical cooperation concluded (as did the 2000 evaluation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services) that the technical cooperation work should be well integrated with the Department's normative work. The evaluation noted also that the Department's analytical activities, including its analysis of global economic and social trends, were designed to support the normative and policy-making functions of the Organization, but it did not provide concrete suggestions to promote adequate interaction between analytical and technical cooperation work, as advocated in recommendation 4. In 2002 the Department informed the Office of Internal Oversight Services that resource constraints, both human and financial, had not allowed such interaction to take place. *The Department stated that since then a reorganization of the Department, including the technical cooperation function, had taken place so as to enable technical cooperation work to be linked more closely to, and to draw on and enrich, the analytical work of the various divisions.*

13. Past experience at the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions shows that interaction between analytical and technical cooperation activities is greatly facilitated when it can be built into existing activities. At ESCAP, for example, the Development Research and Policy Analysis Division (now the Poverty and Development Division), responsible for the preparation of the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific*, combines to the extent possible the various workshops and seminars on specific themes it organizes in the region with the monitoring of more general developments in the relevant national economies. This practice has strengthened the analytical content of the ESCAP *Survey*. Limitations on funds for travel are making it difficult for the

[3] A/57/165, para. 11.

Division to participate in the technical assistance needs assessment missions of other ESCAP divisions. The merger of the Development Research and Policy Analysis Division in 2003 with the operational sections dealing with rural and urban poverty reduction is expected to bring about greater synergy between research and operational activities in the field of poverty reduction, which is one of the central themes of the ESCAP *Survey*. In this way, the consideration of poverty issues is integrated with work on economic policies and prospects in order to make the analysis more useful to the policy makers of the member countries.

14. It is expected that the 2003 reorganization of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which is based on a model of increased collaboration among divisions (see para. 35 below), will provide opportunities to ensure greater interaction between analytical and technical cooperation activities in the Department. *The Department stated that it had, in particular, created three substantive interdivisional task forces, in social development, sustainable development and information and communications technology. These task forces will seek to develop interdivisional technical cooperation products, drawing on the analytical strengths of the various divisions involved in these themes. Also, electronic technical cooperation, which develops learning communities among the Department's staff, advisers, national counterparts and outside experts, is increasingly used as a means to increase the integration of analytical and technical cooperation work, and to reach out beyond the Department in terms of ideas and expertise.* In that respect, progress in the implementation of recommendation 4 will need to be reviewed at a later time.

B. Exchange of information among the global and regional programmes

Recommendation 5
Exchange of information on socio-economic development issues, trends and policies in the Secretariat

Resources permitting, standard procedures should be adopted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions to enhance the exchange of information and ideas on socio-economic development issues. Appropriate procedures could include requests for inputs during the planning phase of the economic and social surveys, requests for comments on preliminary drafts and a regularly updated inventory of studies and working papers completed or in preparation in the different parts of the Secretariat. The effectiveness of such procedures should be periodically reviewed by the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs.

15. Contacts between the Development Policy Analysis Division and the regional commissions have continued, to the extent permitted by time and financial resources. Staff of the Division visited each of the regional commissions at least once in 2001. Staff of the regional commissions also participated in meetings organized by the Division on substantive issues. In the past, the biannual meetings of Project LINK, an international economic research network, have provided the most regular opportunity for exchange of information and ideas between the Division and staff of the regional commissions. However, in recent years, it has been difficult for the representatives of the regional commissions to attend all of the

Project LINK meetings, because of lack of funds. *One regional commission stated that, to enable the commissions to attend the meetings, in addition to the matter of funding, attention should be given to selecting mutually convenient dates of meetings.*

16. *The Department of Economic and Social Affairs stated that the implementation of the recommendation could be further advanced through the collaborative effort on programmatic harmonization made in the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs. In that effort, undertaken initially to finalize programme budget submissions for the biennium 2004-2005 for the entities members of the Committee, 10 thematic groups are engaged in examining cross-cutting substantive areas within the broad framework of poverty eradication and the promotion of sustainable development in the globalizing world. While the immediate focus of the exercise was to identify gaps and overlaps, it also helped promote among the participants greater awareness of each other's work and brought closer together a community of staff working in similar areas in different duty stations. Better coordination and cooperation among the entities mean improved exchange of information on socio-economic development.*

17. There has been some progress towards the adoption of procedures to promote the exchange of ideas during the planning and preparation of the economic surveys and related publications. However, a satisfactory arrangement for systematic consultations among the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions on draft chapters of their respective surveys has not been found. Authors stated to the Office of Internal Oversight Services that tight deadlines for finalizing the surveys make the practice of joint reviews difficult to maintain. *ESCAP stated that possibilities for representatives of the Department to attend the expert group meetings of the regional commissions in which the substantive chapters of the surveys are discussed, as is the case for ESCAP, and reciprocal participation of the commissions in Department meetings, should be actively investigated.* The Office of Internal Oversight Services believes that greater efforts should be made by the various programmes concerned to implement recommendation 5, with advocacy from the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs.

C. Dissemination of global and regional socio-economic analysis

Recommendation 6
Informal network for a wider dissemination of the results of analytical work

The Secretariat should develop an informal network of experts to assist in disseminating United Nations economic and social analysis. Experts who contributed to the economic and social surveys or topical studies or who commented on preliminary drafts of the surveys should be requested to make brief presentations on specific findings of the surveys to national authorities and the press in their country of residence, and at professional meetings they attend.

18. The promotion of United Nations flagship reports in the economic and social sector is essentially the responsibility of one Department of Public Information information officer, usually covering multiple assignments. This stands in contrast to the case of similar flagship publications of the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which are

promoted by a team of professionals and have budgets to hire experts and consultants to promote the publications in several locations worldwide. The intent of recommendation 6 was to compensate to the extent possible for the limited means available to promote United Nations flagship reports by enlisting the good will of experts familiar with the contents of these reports.

19. The enlistment of an informal network of experts to help with the dissemination of United Nations analytical work was pursued by the various programmes in the following manner:

(a) The Department of Economic and Social Affairs asked the members of the Committee for Development Policy, a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council serviced by the Development Policy Analysis Division, to contribute to the dissemination of United Nations analyses;

(b) The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has expanded the network for disseminating findings of its economic analysis and the *Economic Report on Africa*; presentations are made at its intergovernmental meetings and the meetings of the African Economic Research Consortium. ECA plans to make presentations of the findings at its subregional offices, in collaboration with national experts and policy institutions. A group of seven eminent African experts was used to review drafts of the 2002 *Economic Report on Africa*, to help assert its value and thereby enhance its dissemination;

(c) The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) is exploring ways to extend its network of economists, from both governmental and academic circles, and to have the main findings of the *Economic Survey of Europe* presented by national experts in their respective countries, in particular at press conferences when a new issue of that *Survey* is released;

(d) ECLAC is taking the opportunity of using expert group meetings not only to discuss specific issues on the agenda of the meetings but also to disseminate the results of ECLAC's analytical work;

(e) Since late 1999, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) informal network of experts has been in place to assist in disseminating ESCAP economic and social analysis in 15 countries in the region. Similarly, a group of eminent persons was established in late 2001 to serve as the expert group for the preparation of the new annual *Bulletin on Asia-Pacific Perspectives* and also for the Asia-Pacific *Survey*, thereby further enhancing the informal network of national experts;

(f) For the wider dissemination of its social and economic analysis, including the analysis of issues relating to women and gender, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) encouraged its staff to publish articles in local newspapers and to use the media, particularly television. During the biennium 2002-2003, ESCWA implemented a media strategy that included the broadcast of 11 televised episodes and a gender-awareness media campaign involving 15 one-hour episodes on the 12 areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action.[4]

[4] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

20. The Office of Internal Oversight Services considers that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions have made concerted efforts to implement recommendation 6. The results of their initiatives, some of them quite recent, will need to be assessed in a year or two.

Recommendation 7
Reaching the professional community

The Secretariat should endeavour to make a greater contribution to the world professional debate outside the United Nations on the issues of socio-economic development and, resources permitting, expand the good practices of a few Secretariat units, inter alia, by:

(a) Encouraging staff to participate in professional conferences and seminars and to make contributions to professional journals, with priority given to meetings and journals of interest to development economists and policy makers in governments;

(b) United Nations publications on economic and social development should be prepared using rigorous quality control arrangements; working papers, such as the Department of Economic and Social Affairs discussion paper series, should be subject to a referee system similar to that used in the professional community prior to publication.

21. ECE and ECLAC continued their well-established practice of contributing to professional conferences and journals in their regions. Adjustments required in other programmes to implement recommendation 7 (a) were not always possible. The Development Policy Analysis Division reported that all of its professional staff members had participated in at least one outside conference in 2001, but that workload did not permit the allocation of as many staff-hours for such activities as might be desirable. ESCAP places priority on the contribution its staff are making to the in-house *Asia-Pacific Development Journal*, and the series entitled *Development Papers*. Whenever possible, ESCAP staff also contribute to external journals and seminars. At ECA, the Economic and Social Policy Division has instituted regular seminars and encourages its professional staff to make presentations, which could be the basis for publications in its Discussion and Working Papers after further internal peer review. ESCWA encouraged its professional staff to publish articles in local newspapers on social and economic issues and on the situation of Arab women as part of its strategy to disseminate information (see para.19 (f) above).

22. The programmes involved made an effort to improve the quality control of publications prior to publishing. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs is using specific arrangements that vary with the nature of the publication. ESCWA assigned a senior staff member to address the issue of quality control of outputs, in addition to the existing mechanisms of review. At ESCAP, the referee and peer review system for publications is being systematized and strengthened. *ESCAP stated that, in view of the cost factor, external peer review will be conducted only for selected key publications, while internal peer review will be institutionalized as a precondition for the publishing of all documents.* At ECA, internal and external peer reviews of publications have been strengthened. However, the inadequacy of financial resources has had an adverse impact on the practice. For example, ECA had to suspend its annual joint publication with Oxford University, the *Journal of African Economies*. Officials in one of the programmes reviewed in the present

report misunderstood the value of using a referee system, which is a mechanism to enhance the visibility of publications in the professional community; thinking that the system was to be used mostly to control the content of publications, they did not think it was needed, as there were sufficient control mechanisms in place.

23. In the opinion of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, recommendation 7 has been implemented unevenly. The need for further efforts by the various programmes should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and in conjunction with the implementation of recommendation 6, which also relies on the contributions of experts from the professional community.

Recommendation 8
Free distribution and sales

Arrangements for the dissemination of analysis prepared for distribution in print or in electronic form should be reviewed, so that, inter alia:

(a) Mailing lists for free distribution are systematically derived from major categories of users (e.g. research departments in central banks, focal points in governments, national economic and social research institutes, professional journals);

(b) Mailing lists are updated regularly;

(c) Adequate resources are allocated to the development and maintenance of web sites to enhance their usefulness;

(d) Recurrent publications are released, with due attention to the calendar of intergovernmental meetings, at a time of the year when their findings are still relevant to the interested public;

(e) Sales strategies, including entering into contracts with local publishers, serve the primary purpose of the United Nations publications, which is to increase the dissemination of the United Nations perspective on issues of socio-economic development;

(f) Formal and informal feedback is used to review the effectiveness of these arrangements at regular intervals.

24. The good practices of mailing-list management set out in recommendations 8 (a) and 8 (b) are now more regularly applied by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions. The Department revised its mailing lists and, as part of this process, in 2001 all central banks were added to the distribution list for the *World Economic and Social Survey*. ESCAP's mailing lists for free distribution are systematically derived from major categories of users and updated annually, and at other times if necessary. ESCAP is also expanding the mailing list for the *Survey* to include ministers of finance and governors of central banks. ESCWA's general and specialized mailing lists are updated every six months, using information from the responses to questionnaires sent to end-users. ECA has developed a mailing-list database that includes various stakeholder groups. The mailing list is updated by each division, with a focal point in the central communication team facilitating the process. The ECE distribution list is periodically updated, in particular by reviewing academic journals, newspapers and business magazines to identify experts, academics and policy makers, as well as through contacts at international conferences and seminars.

25. In accordance with recommendation 8 (c), all the programmes concerned have now allocated resources, or have taken the necessary steps to do so, to ensure sound management of their web sites. In 2002, ESCAP was able to create two full-time positions to enhance the dissemination of economic and social analyses and related public information material through its web sites. ESCWA appointed an information master to review information material and place it on its web site. The material is now available in English and Arabic, and the number of visits to the site has increased significantly. ECE has an information technology post dedicated to the technical production of the Europe *Survey*, including its timely availability to Governments on the ECE web site. In April 2002 ECLAC established an Internet Development and Coordination Unit, in charge of managing the institutional web site, maintaining its technological platform and developing new Internet applications and systems. At ECA, most of the funding for web-related activities has come from extrabudgetary sources. For example, in 2002, one Government contributed more than $100,000 to enhance the French-language site. ECA expects more consolidated support for web development activities from the regular budget for the biennium 2004-2005.

26. The timeliness of the publications, an issue raised in recommendation 8 (d), has improved. The main economic survey reports prepared at the request of intergovernmental bodies are, in some cases, issued early enough to allow for discussions both within the Secretariat and with Member States before intergovernmental meetings; at ECE this is accomplished through the provision of advance-copy versions. ECE stated that in 2003, it had reinstated an item on the agenda under which the ECE secretariat presents main findings and policy conclusions, followed by a general discussion. However, the long delay between the time when the advance text is made available and the publication of the final version affects ECE's ability to make its economic analysis available to its readership in timely fashion. In this respect, the Europe *Survey* must be given higher priority in printing schedules than is presently the case. The timing of the release of publications that provide year-end assessments of developments in the global economy, and their impact and implications for the coming year, such as the *World Economic Situation and Prospects* (Department of Economic and Social Affairs and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the *Bulletin on Asia-Pacific Perspectives* (ESCAP) and the *Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean* (ECLAC), is extremely important. In 2002 and 2003 the *World Economic Situation and Prospects* was released, during the first few days of the year, an improvement over previous years. In January 2003, the Department of Public Information was able for the first time to coordinate with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNCTAD the promotion of the *World Economic Situation and Prospects*, at joint press conferences in New York and Geneva, led respectively by UNCTAD and Department officials. News agencies filed 24 stories on that publication in 2003, which compares well with the 34 stories filed by news agencies in 2002 on the World Bank *World Development Report*, which benefits from extensive worldwide promotion.

27. There have been occasional setbacks. For example, in 2002 the release of the *World Economic and Social Survey* was delayed by several months, owing in part to additional internal review procedures. At ECA, in addition to difficulties in arranging external peer reviews, there are failures in coordination between units

responsible for the preparation of publications and the production unit. ECA management has launched a major effort to correct this problem.

28. In accordance with recommendation 8 (e), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions have explored several strategies to increase the sales of publications. For example, in addition to the usual promotional efforts at major conferences and book fairs, ECA, ECLAC and ESCWA have developed a web marketing strategy to highlight their publications. The sale of the ECE *Survey* is promoted at the Geneva International Book Fair, but advertising in the international media seems to have ceased. ESCAP is exploring the feasibility of entering into contracts with local publishers for selected publications. To improve the dissemination of its specialized documents, ECLAC has concluded agreements with leading publishing companies that cover a significant portion of the Latin American region. This has been especially effective in the production of extrabudgetary publications. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has not entered into any contracts with local publishers, but has used the United Nations University Press as an outlet to increase the dissemination of its analysis.

29. Several regional commissions advised the Office of Internal Oversight Services that the sales limitations identified in the 2000 evaluation by that Office still existed. For example, the sale prices of their publications, set at Headquarters, are too high for the markets in their regions. Attempts to use local publishers, which could publish at lower cost, have sometimes failed because of the time taken by Headquarters to arrive at a decision and the stringent conditions set for publication. The Department of Public Information, which coordinates these efforts, explained that tiered pricing to allow for lower prices in developing countries has been applied in selected markets. The policy of expanding distribution through local and regional publishers will be continued to the extent that it can be achieved without committing budgeted resources. It is hoped that the recent changes made to the United Nations Publications Board and its mandate will lead to greater cooperation with the regional working groups and improve the decision-making process.

30. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions are using several approaches to obtain feedback on the effectiveness of their dissemination of information, in accordance with recommendation 8 (f). Approaches range from the informal gathering of articles found in the press to the administration of formal readership surveys. In the experience of these programmes, both formal and informal approaches have provided useful information. Several regional commissions have diversified the methods they use for feedback. Such methods include soliciting the views of government representatives attending meetings, inserting survey forms in publications, and interacting with web site users. The programmes will need to examine the question of whether this diversification of methods is providing them with the more comprehensive feedback that has so far been missing.

31. The Office of Internal Oversight Services considers that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions have given adequate attention to key elements of recommendation 8. It is expected that the second phase of the United Nations reform will provide additional opportunities to pursue the full implementation of the recommendation (see para. 34 below).

D. Capacity of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs

32. In addition to the recommendations made by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in the 2000 in-depth evaluation, endorsed by CPC, the Committee recommended that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs take measures to review its capacity to carry out in a better manner the analysis of socio-economic development trends.[5]

33. The Department decided that the recommended review would be undertaken in the light of the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Both events took place in 2002, and eventually the review of the Department's capacity to carry out analytical work was subsumed under the broader assessment that led to the proposals for reform presented by the Secretary-General in his report "Strengthening the United Nations: an agenda for further change"[6] in September 2002. It is the view of the Office of Internal Oversight Services that the Department should have proceeded sooner with the recommended review instead of waiting more than two years before undertaking it. If the review of the Department's capacity to carry out analytical work had been conducted earlier, the initial steps taken would have been followed by appropriate adjustments at the end of 2002.

34. The report of the Secretary-General states that the impact and relevance of what the United Nations does is critically reliant on the quality of its reports and stresses that "the value of the reports is dependent on the depth of research that underpins them, the clarity with which their content is communicated, and the timeliness of their production and delivery schedules."[7] This perspective was already the basis for the 2000 evaluation recommendations endorsed by CPC and is also the subject of the present triennial review. In this respect, the report of the Secretary-General is providing additional impetus for full implementation of the CPC recommendations.

35. In order to implement the recommendations of the report of the Secretary-General and the related General Assembly resolution 57/300, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs was reorganized in early 2003. The reorganization included, inter alia, the creation of:

(a) The Financing for Development Office, to provide support for the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development;

(b) The Development Policy and Planning Office, to formulate advice for development policy and the preparation of major cross-sectoral departmental reports, including the coordination of the preparation of the Department's major flagship publication;

(c) The Economic Assessment Unit, to analyse global economic trends, prospects and issues.

The Development Policy Analysis Division, which had been preparing the Department's economic flagship publication, was reorganized into these three new

[5] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 16* and corrigenda (A/55/16 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. II, sect. C, para. 244.

[6] A/57/387 and Corr.1.

[7] Ibid., para. 87.

entities. It is envisaged that the Development Policy and Planning Office will provide major substantive inputs for the preparation of the main cross-sectoral departmental reports and, relying on the collective competencies of the Department, will draw from the expertise that exists in various parts of the Department.

36. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs should assess, at the end of 2005, to what extent this new arrangement has enhanced the Department's capacity to carry out the analysis of socio-economic development trends, as recommended by CPC.

III. Conclusions and recommendation

37. **The Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions have made concerted efforts to further improve the quality of their analysis of socio-economic development trends and ensure that it is reaching government officials and the interested public, as recommended by CPC. Improvements in the presentation of this analysis in the *World Economic and Social Survey* have somewhat facilitated its dissemination by the media.**

38. **The Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions have applied more consistently effective publishing practices, such as improving the quality of the manuscripts and the timeliness of their publication, increasing the number of special briefings to government officials and the press, and making free distribution and sales strategies more effective.**

39. **Greater efforts should be made by the programmes concerned to ensure that their economic analyses serve as a source for understanding long-term trends. Such analyses would be important contributions to the international community towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.**

40. **In a few programmes, the interaction between analytical and technical cooperation activities has strengthened the content of the analysis of socio-economic trends. This practice has been insufficiently developed and, on the basis of past experience, requires more systematic integration of analytical work in existing technical cooperation activities.**

41. **The exchange of information and ideas among the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the regional commissions takes place in different forums but would benefit from a more focused and institutionalized approach. For example, the exchange of ideas during the planning and preparation of the global and regional economic surveys does not follow any standard procedures, and continuity is not assured.**

42. **Concerned with the significant decrease in resources allocated to the global programme responsible for the analysis of socio-economic development trends, CPC recommended in 2000 that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs take measures to review its capacity to carry out such analysis in a better manner. The Department believed that it should await the outcomes of the International Conference on Financing for Development and of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, both in 2002, to decide on the most effective measures to take. After reviewing the outcomes of those important events, and taking into account General Assembly resolution 57/300 on the**

Secretary-General's proposals for further change, the Department proceeded with a reorganization of its structure in early 2003.

43. **As a result of that reorganization, the Department expects that its future analyses of socio-economic development trends will be strengthened through increased reliance on the collective competencies of the Department. The results of the 2003 reorganization should be reviewed at the end of 2005 to assess to what extent the new arrangement has indeed enhanced the Department's capacity to carry out its analytical work.**

Recommendation
Capacity of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to carry out the analysis of socio-economic development trends

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs should assess, at the end of 2005, to what extent the Department's 2003 reorganization has enhanced its capacity to carry out the analysis of socio-economic development trends, as recommended by the Committee for Programme and Coordination. The conclusions of this assessment should be reported by the Department in its programme performance report for the biennium 2004-2005, in the framework of results and self-evaluation reporting.

(*Signed*) Dileep **Nair**
Under-Secretary-General
for Internal Oversight Services

United Nations E/AC.51/2003/5

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Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Programme questions: evaluation

Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its fortieth session on the in-depth evaluation of the advancement of women programme

Note by the Secretary-General

In conformity with General Assembly resolutions 48/218 B of 29 July 1994 and 54/244 of 23 December 1999, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the attached report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its fortieth session on the in-depth evaluation of the advancement of women (E/AC.51/2000/3). The report has been reviewed by the relevant departments and offices. The Secretary-General takes note of its findings and concurs with its recommendations.

* E/AC.51/2003/1.

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Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its fortieth session on the in-depth evaluation of the advancement of women programme

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its twenty-second session to review the implementation of its recommendations three years after taking decisions resulting from an in-depth evaluation.

This triennial review concludes that the advancement of women programme has implemented or taken adequate measures towards implementing the recommendations of the evaluation of the programme endorsed by the Committee in 2000. In some instances, the results are already observable. For example, the exceptional measures adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, including holding additional meetings and allowing States parties to combine outstanding reports into one report, resulted in a significant decrease in the backlog of States parties' reports awaiting consideration by the Committee.

Inter-agency coordination, communication and information have been enhanced by more extensive exchange of experience during the meetings of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, and through the establishment of an Inter-Agency Network web site. The review noted that the task forces of the Inter-Agency Network were frequently collaborating and sharing work plans and strategies.

With respect to the monitoring of the status of women in the Secretariat, the Office of Human Resources Management has postponed issuance of a new Secretary-General's bulletin on policies to achieve gender equality, as it is believed to be too soon to assess the impact on gender issues of the new recruitment, promotion and placement system which came into effect in May 2002.

Regarding the dissemination of information, the Office of Internal Oversight Services noted that the Division for the Advancement of Women, in collaboration with the Sales and Marketing Section of the Department of Public Information, has developed a multiple-channel marketing approach. Consultations between the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Department of Public Information would have been more effective, however, if they had been initiated during the planning stage of the programme of publications. The timeliness and content of information posted on the advancement of women web sites have improved. Several online discussions with non-governmental organizations and other concerned groups, in preparation for sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women, were held during the period. The efforts of the Division for the Advancement of Women to facilitate the work of non-governmental organizations has resulted in an increase in the number of those organizations which attend the sessions of the Commission. The Division should continue to review the respective organizational arrangements for the presentation of non-governmental organizations positions to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

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I. Introduction

1. At its fortieth session, in 2000, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the advancement of women programme (E/AC.51/2000/3). The Committee endorsed recommendations 1 to 10 (a) of the evaluation report, concerning the following issues: improving the effectiveness of the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; increasing the participation of other entities of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations in the work of the programme; and improving the dissemination of information.[1]

2. The present report contains the findings of the triennial review conducted to determine the extent to which the recommendations endorsed by the Committee for Programme and Coordination three years ago have been implemented. The status of implementation of the recommendations is discussed under the following headings: Support to the intergovernmental processes; Monitoring the status of women in the Secretariat; Coordination; and Outreach.

3. The advancement of women programme is implemented by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women. The Division provides substantive services to relevant intergovernmental bodies such as the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The triennial review is based on (a) the information provided by the Office of the Special Adviser and the Division on progress they made in implementing the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, a process which is monitored twice a year by the Office of Internal Oversight Services; (b) a review of the relevant documentation and information obtained from the programme and concerned organizations; and (c) consultations with staff of the programme, organizations of the United Nations system and relevant non-governmental organizations.

II. Findings

A. Support to intergovernmental processes

Recommendation 1
Support to enhance the effectiveness of the reporting mechanism of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

(a) *Backlog*. The secretariat of the Committee should further study ways to reduce the backlog and propose to the Committee targets and methods to achieve this objective.

(b) *Overdue reports*. The secretariat should propose to the Committee a plan to reduce the number of overdue reports by considering the adoption of procedures that have been used by other treaty bodies, such as sending periodic

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 16* and corrigenda (A/55/16 and Corr.1 and 2), paras. 245-257.

reminders to States parties and encouraging those States parties that have never submitted an initial report (54 as of December 1999) to request technical assistance.

(c) Given the emphasis placed by the Committee on openness to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the secretariat should ensure that concerned NGOs are informed of a State party's presentation of its report sufficiently in advance to allow them to participate in the meetings, that they are provided with the relevant guidelines and that they are encouraged to translate their reports into the working languages of the United Nations, taking into account the understanding of the Committee for Programme and Coordination that notification of consideration of reports would continue to be provided in the *Journal of the United Nations* and that all non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the United Nations already had an obligation to translate their reports into the working languages of the United Nations.[2]

4. In regard to the issue of the backlog in the consideration of States parties' reports by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, addressed in recommendation 1 (a), the Office of Internal Oversight Services noted that the backlog has diminished from 48 reports in December 1999 to 17 reports in February 2003. This reduction can be attributed to the following measures: (a) Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women decision 23/II of June 2000 allowing States parties on an exceptional basis to combine outstanding reports into a single document to be considered at the same session; (b) in 2001, the General Assembly approved the request of the Division for the Advancement of Women for an exceptional session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to reduce the backlog. During that session, held in August 2002, the Committee considered 14 reports submitted by 11 States parties.

5. As the number of outstanding reporting obligations by States parties to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, raised in recommendation 1 (b), continued to be an issue, the Committee at its twenty-seventh session, in June 2002, adopted a strategy to improve reporting by States parties. The main elements of this strategy are (a) systematic reminders to States parties whose reports are more than five years overdue, drawing their attention to Committee decision 23/II on the consolidation of reporting obligations and the availability of technical assistance; (b) informal meetings between Committee members and non-reporting States parties to discuss challenges to timely reporting; and (c) encouraging the Division for the Advancement of Women and other United Nations entities to provide technical assistance to States parties at their request (A/57/38 (Part II), para. 369). In 2002, the Committee also requested its secretariat (i.e., the Women's Rights Unit of the Division) to provide it with an analysis of the reasons for non-reporting by States parties for consideration at the twenty-ninth session, in June/July 2003. The Committee has also scheduled, during its twenty-ninth session, a meeting with States parties whose reports are overdue by more than five years to further explore solutions to the problem.

6. The Office of Internal Oversight Services was informed that the Division for the Advancement of Women has provided information about the technical assistance

[2] Ibid., para. 256.

services it offers to States parties upon their request at meetings of States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as at a meeting with States not parties (January 2003), and during consultations with individual States.

7. In implementing recommendation 1 (c), the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women identifies States whose reports will be considered by the Committee and notifies them three sessions (18 months) in advance. Non-governmental organizations are informed of these schedules through the report of the Committee and the information posted on the Division's web site as well as through the *Journal of the United Nations*. As is noted in paragraph 30 below, the Division gave priority to time-sensitive material and disseminated it through the web site as soon as it became available. Non-governmental organizations are entitled to submit reports to the Committee and also to address the Committee and its pre-sessional working group. The Office of Internal Oversight Services was informed that one NGO, International Women's Rights Action Watch, has developed a set of guidelines for non-governmental organizations, in consultation with the Committee and the Division. NGOs have oeen encouraged to translate their reports to the Committee into the working languages of the United Nations.

8. The Office of Internal Oversight Services is of the opinion that there was significant progress regarding the issues identified in recommendations 1 (a) and (b) and that necessary steps were taken regarding implementing recommendation 1 (c).

Recommendation 2
Enhance efforts to promote the work of CEDAW

The Division for the Advancement of Women should indicate on its web site that the summary records of the Committee are available in hard copy and how interested parties can obtain them, and publication of *The Work of CEDAW* should be terminated.

9. Each volume of *The Work of CEDAW* contains the reports on sessions held during a given year and the corresponding summary records of the discussions already issued as documents of the United Nations. The last volume of the series, volume IV, was published in 1997 and included documents pertaining to the sessions held in 1989. Given the 10-year backlog of publications and the fact that the documents contained in the publications are available sooner in print as official documents and in electronic format (web sites of the Division for the Advancement of Women), the Office of Internal Oversight Services recommended in 2000 that the publication be discontinued. As recommended, the Division has not published any further volumes since 1997. In its comments on an earlier draft of this report, the Division stated that *at the last Committee session in January 2003, members of the Committee regretted the fact that the summary records were so late and that* The Work of CEDAW *was not available. The Division also stated that its goal is to make* The Work of CEDAW *available on the web site as that would be the most efficient way of disseminating information on the Committee.* The Office of Internal Oversight Services is in agreement with that objective and noted that the summary records issued are delayed by an estimated average of two years.

B. Monitoring the Status of Women in the Secretariat

Recommendation 3
A new Secretary-General's bulletin

In order to encourage the implementation of the newly revised special measures, ST/SGB/282 of 5 January 1996 should be revised to reflect the stronger measures endorsed by the General Assembly.

10. Updating the Secretary-General's bulletin on policies to achieve gender equality was postponed as a result of a new recruitment, promotion and placement system which came into effect on 1 May 2002. Under the new system, the heads of Department or Office have direct responsibility for ensuring equal representation of women at all levels. As it is too soon to assess the impact of the new system on the representation of women (see A/57/447, para. 59), the Office of Human Resources Management has postponed the issuance of a revised Secretary-General's bulletin. A review of the new recruitment, promotion and placement system will be required to identify precisely what special measures may be needed to achieve gender balance in the United Nations Secretariat.

11. Implementation of recommendation 3 was postponed owing to changes in the system of recruitment, promotion and placement.

C. Coordination

Recommendation 4
Improving coordination within the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality

(a) In order to ensure regular contact, the Division for the Advancement of Women should propose to the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality the creation of an electronic information network among members of that Committee for monthly e-mail briefings on substantive issues discussed at Headquarters and New York-based agencies and follow-up to task force discussions. This would facilitate more regular sharing of information.

(b) The Division for the Advancement of Women should propose to the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, extending the duration of the Committee's meetings by one or two days or have a one- or two-day "preparatory" to the Committee with specific items for in-depth discussion.

12. In connection with the use of an inter-agency electronic information network raised in recommendation 4 (a), the Office of Internal Oversight Services was informed that much of the work of the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, now the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, is currently carried out electronically, both throughout the Inter-Agency Network and within its task forces set up to work on particular issues, thus increasing the regular sharing of information. Communication and information-sharing on the activities and outputs of the Network was also facilitated by the launching of an Inter-Agency Network web site in December 2002.

13. The Office of Internal Oversight Services concludes that much progress was made in implementing recommendation 4 (a). Monthly e-mail briefings have not been established as recommended but considering that, at this time, various Inter-Agency Network task forces have different schedules and meeting requirements, flexibility exercised by the task force managers in determining the frequency of electronic communication with their respective members is a more effective approach. Systematic use of these methods of communicating should continue to be encouraged by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues. For example, notices for intersessional Inter-Agency Network meetings should be posted well ahead of the meetings to promote internal consultations within each organization.

14. The implementation of the recommendation to extend the duration of the inter-agency meetings (recommendation 4 (b)) has resulted in the duration of the annual meetings of the Inter-Agency Network being extended from three to four days. Of those four days, one day is devoted to a workshop on methods for gender mainstreaming which allows for the exchange of ideas and experiences on gender mainstreaming among members of the Network. The Office of Internal Oversight Services also concludes that recommendation 4 (b) was implemented.

Recommendation 5
Greater coordination between the Division for the Advancement of Women and other United Nations programmes and entities

(a) Regular discussions of strategies and annual work plans should take place at the senior level between the Division for the Advancement of Women and other United Nations programmes and entities, taking into consideration their comparative advantage.

(b) United Nations entities providing gender advisory services, such as the Division for the Advancement of Women, UNDP, UNIFEM and the regional commissions, should exchange work plans and take other measures to ensure that activities in this area are well coordinated and reflect comparative advantage.

15. The intent of recommendation 5 was to prevent duplication and promote consistency in gender policies and strategies throughout the United Nations system. the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights have continued the practice established in 1995 of formulating a joint annual work plan which is submitted to both the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights. Both the Special Adviser and the Director of the Division hold high-level discussions on policies and strategies for gender mainstreaming and gender balance with representatives of other United Nations entities as well as with heads of departments and offices in the Secretariat, including the regional commissions. Consultations were held with all Gender Focal Points in organizations represented in the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs in the preparation of the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.

16. As part of their work as task managers and chairs of several of the Inter-Agency Network task forces, both the Special Adviser and the Director of the Division have coordinated the preparation of joint action and work plans. The Special Adviser's participation in the Executive Committees on Economic and Social Affairs, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Affairs has provided

opportunities for exchanges on the work done on gender equality in the United Nations. The report on the second session of the Inter-Agency Network has been forwarded to the High-level Committees on Programmes and Management of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

17. Increased coordination between the Office of the Special Adviser and the Division for the Advancement of Women and other United Nations organizations found concrete expression in joint projects. An example of effective collaboration is the task force chaired by the Office of the Special Adviser to support the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. The 18-member task force jointly monitors the implementation of various aspects of the resolution, in which the Council underlined the vital role of women in conflict resolution and mandated a review of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building, and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution. The preparation of the study requested by the Council, entitled *Women, Peace and Security*,[3] was coordinated by the Special Adviser in close cooperation with the Inter-Agency Network task force. The study was completed in 2002. A second example of collaboration is the gender mainstreaming kit prepared jointly by the Office of the Special Adviser and the Division and based on the good practices of the United Nations system. It is expected that the kit, which will be updated periodically, will support the Organization's strategy to achieve gender equality in programmatic and operational work. Expert group meetings organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women are usually held in close collaboration with relevant organizations of the United Nations system. For example, at the three expert group meetings held in 2002, collaboration was established with the Department of Public Information, the Office on Drugs and Crime, ESCWA, UNESCO, ITU and the Information and Communication Technologies Task Force.

18. The Office of Internal Oversight Services is of the opinion that significant progress was achieved in implementing recommendation 5 (a). More could be done, however, to improve the access of the Department of Public Information to advance information on activities undertaken by the Division for the Advancement of Women, especially those carried out away from Headquarters, so that the global network of United Nations information centres can be fully involved in providing promotional services for those activities. In preparation for the conference to be held in 2005, 10 years after the Beijing Conference, the Office of Internal Oversight Services believes that the process of coordination with the regional commissions should be initiated as early as possible to allow sufficient time for the consolidation of regions' position papers into the global position paper. In its comments on an earlier draft of this report, the Division for the Advancement of Women stated that *the process of coordination with the regional commissions in planning for the 10-year review and appraisal is well under way and a series of meetings were held in February 2003 in conjunction with the Inter-Agency Network and the Commission on the Status of Women. The Special Adviser is visiting ECLAC in April 2003 to further discuss cooperation on this matter, among other issues.*

19. With regard to the need to improve the coordination of gender advisory services raised in recommendation 5 (b), the Office of Internal Oversight Services was informed that, in 2002 and 2003, meetings were held with the Gender Focal

[3] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.IV.1.

Points of the regional commissions, in the context of the inter-agency meeting in New York, to discuss collaboration and coordination around technical cooperation programmes. It was agreed that this consultation meeting would be held annually. These consultations are part of the efforts of the Division for the Advancement of Women to ensure that technical cooperation activities are well coordinated. The Division collaborates with the regional commissions, for example, in relation to the activities to strengthen the capacity of national mechanisms for gender equality, to support implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and to enhance the role of women in the peace and security process as requested in Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). In order to enhance coordination and reduce the risk of overlap, UNIFEM, UNDP and UNFPA are also invited to participate and contribute to those activities, where appropriate.

20. It is the opinion of the Office of Internal Oversight Services that significant steps were taken towards implementing recommendation 5 (b).

D. Outreach

Recommendation 6
Marketing and distribution of the Division for the Advancement of Women publications

In close collaboration with other relevant departments, the Division for the Advancement of Women should identify potential target audiences and develop different marketing and distribution approaches for various types of publication, based on the commercial potential of the publication:

(a) With respect to publications that are issued as sales publications as a matter of record or for other non-commercial reasons, print runs should be small; the information contained in these publications should be posted on the WomenWatch web site.

(b) Publications that are of potential commercial significance should be financed, produced, advertised and sold so as to maximize sales revenues, with online information made available in a manner that protects the United Nations commercial interest in those publications. For these, advertising, book launches and other publicity events should be organized.

(c) Not-for-sale publications should be issued in an inexpensive print form and included on the WomenWatch web site.

21. The Division for the Advancement of Women and the Sales and Marketing Section of the Department of Public Information have worked closely during the period on developing and executing plans for the promotion of publications of the Office of the Special Adviser and the Division, an issue addressed in recommendation 6 (b). It is noted that direct collaboration usually begins when the preparation of a publication is well under way. As a result of these consultations, a marketing strategy focusing on multiple channels is adopted. publications of the Office of the Special Adviser and the Division are featured on the United Nations publications web site and in their catalogue of sales publications and are submitted to online bookstores (such as Barnes and Noble and Amazon.com). Copies are sent to key journals soliciting reviews, special promotions are offered to academics, and copies are exhibited at major international professional and book industry

conferences. Direct mail projects and advertisement include fliers and a catalogue on women publications. In addition, the Division's publications are distributed and exhibited during major conferences, meetings and events. In its comments on an earlier draft the Division stated that it produces very few publications (one in 2001 and three in 2002) and that collaboration with the Department of Public Information cannot begin before a publication is planned.

22. Non-sale publications of the Office of the Special Adviser and the Division are posted on the Division's web site and distributed during major conferences, meetings and events. Some non-sale publications such as *Women 2000 and Beyond* and the *Network* newsletter of the Office of the Special Adviser are produced in-house in small print runs. The electronic version of the latter is also posted on the Office web site. The implementation of recommendation 6 will receive further support as a result of the Secretary-General's report on the strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change (A/57/387 and Corr.1, paras. 79-82), which encourages the dissemination of information online, and inexpensive print formats.

23. The Office of Internal Oversight Services is of the opinion that the Office of the Special Adviser and the Division for the Advancement of Women have made good progress in implementing recommendations 6 (a), (b) and (c). While the collaboration between the Division and the Sales and Marketing Section of the Department of Public Information is meaningful, consultations between the two entities in the planning stage of publications could identify additional material worth publishing, enhance the marketability of planned publications and identify potential target audiences.

Recommendation 7
Marketing data

The Marketing and Sales Section of the Department of Public Information should provide periodic feedback to author departments on sales.

24. The Division for the Advancement of Women was able to obtain statistics whenever it requested it. The Office of Internal Oversight Services has observed that statistics on sales of publications are more readily available than was the case previously, and considers that the concerns raised in recommendation 7 have been adequately addressed.

Recommendation 8
Use of professional journals

The staff of the Division for the Advancement of Women should be encouraged to publish articles in professional journals on the work of the programme on the advancement of women.

25. On the basis of the report of a 1998 expert group, the Division for the Advancement of Women has contributed material for a forthcoming book entitled *National machineries for the advancement of women: mainstreaming gender, democratizing the State?* Some Division staff members have had the opportunity to publish articles in periodicals, most recently an article on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, in a regional journal in 2003. The Special Adviser contributed to a book of articles

on Afghanistan.[4] "Heavy workload in the Office of the Special Adviser and the Division, however, restrict the opportunities for staff to publish articles.

26. As part of their participation in conferences, workshops and conventions held by national mechanisms and international and non-governmental organizations, both the Special Adviser and the Director of the Division have made presentations on a wide range of substantive subjects. The Division receives many requests for information on its work and its web site, which provides the only access to intergovernmental processes on gender equality and their outcomes, has a high visitor frequency. The expert group meetings organized by the Division stimulate considerable interest, including from academics and researchers; Division publications are widely disseminated and positive feedback is received from users. The work of the Division relating to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has clearly generated research and articles. It is, however, impossible to know the extent to which the above-mentioned information provides inputs for articles and publications by researchers and advocates.

27. On the basis of the information provided, the Office of Internal Oversight Services concludes that the scope and coverage of the outreach of the Office of the Special Adviser and the Division to policy makers and advocacy groups is good. Outreach to academics and researchers through publications in professional journals prepared by Division staff is limited and, considering the Division's present workload, it is not expected that the situation will change in the near future.

Recommendation 9
WomenWatch and the Division for the Advancement of Women web sites

The WomenWatch and the Division for the Advancement of Women web sites should be improved in the following ways:

(a) The end users' profiles and needs should be determined so that they can be better met through the information and design of the web site;

(b) In posting available documents on the site, priority should be given to time sensitive material such as agenda for upcoming meetings;

(c) The feasibility of extending online dialogues to include preparatory processes for sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women to allow more in-depth participation in these events should be explored.

28. The Office of Internal Oversight Services noted that an assessment of the WomenWatch web site was conducted in 2001. The assessment found that the site served as a portal to information on work carried to promote gender equality across the United Nations system. It was decided that the site should continue to provide that service and be enhanced. As a result of the assessment, the site was redesigned and the first stage of this process was completed in February 2002 to include a directory of approximately 550 links to on-line gender resources of United Nations organizations. In 2002, the Division for the Advancement of Women initiated internal consultations on ways to improve the user-friendliness of its own web site, on the basis of its understanding of the needs of major target groups. Since then,

[4] Sunita Mehta, ed., *Women for Afghan Women: Shattering Myths and Claiming the Future* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

improvements on the information posted and design of the site have been implemented.

29. End users' profiles are also determined during online discussions organized by the Division, in which participants are asked to provide basic information for statistical purposes. End users' needs can also be determined through messages received via e-mail. The possibility of an online survey to determine the user-friendliness of the web sites is another option being considered by the Office of the Special Adviser and Division. The Division has acquired software which analyses web traffic and which is capable of producing profile reports on visitors. The United Nations web server does not however provide the type of information needed by the software to produce these detailed reports.

30. The Office of Internal Oversight Services noted that, as part of the process of providing regularly updated information on the two web sites (WomenWatch and Division for the Advancement of Wom) about the Division's work programme, the webmasters for these web sites have given priority to time-sensitive material, posting official documents as soon as they become available in ODS (Official Document System of the United Nations), and have continued to collaborate to ensure that WomenWatch has links to updated information from the web sites of the Division and the Office of the Special Adviser.

31. The Office of Internal Oversight Services was informed that several online discussions were organized during the period. For example, over 360 people participated in a six-week online discussion on gender equality, environmental management and natural disasters, held in 2001, and approximately 500 people participated in two five-week online discussions on the topics "Women and information and communication technologies" and "Women and the media", held in 2002 as part of preparations for the discussion of these questions by the Commission on the Status of Women. Non-governmental organizations have been invited to participate in these online discussions, as have other members of civil society, international organizations and academia.

32. The Office of Internal Oversight Services is of the opinion that significant progress was achieved in implementing recommendations 9 (a), (b) and (c). More progress could be made in assessing users' needs through analysis of e-mail messages and through online surveys, as was suggested by the Division for the Advancement of Women. The Office of Internal Oversight Services was informed that some United Nations agencies were not informed in advance of these online discussions and were unable to participate in them. In comments on an earlier draft of the report, *the Division for the Advancement of Women stated that information on the online dialogue is available though WomenWatch, which is accessible to all parts of the United Nations system. United Nations organizations which can contribute most to the topic of the online discussions are directly informed and involved.*

Recommendation 10
Enhanced collaboration with non-governmental organizations

In the light of the high level of interest of non-governmental organizations and the importance placed on their support and involvement, the following measures should be taken to enable the Division for the Advancement of

Women to facilitate adequately their participation in relevant United Nations activities:

(a) Increase the means and frequency of communication between the Division for the Advancement of Women and NGOs, including more briefings on relevant issues and more open dialogue through various means (e.g., meetings, online discussions).

33. In connection with the need to improve dialogue and communications with non-governmental organizations raised in recommendation 10 (a), the Division for the Advancement of Women has continued to provide substantive and procedural briefings to NGOs on the work of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and has actively participated with such organizations in joint panels and workshops during and in advance of the sessions of those intergovernmental bodies. The web sites mentioned in paragraphs 28 and 30 above have also provided information to assist the non-governmental organizations in planning for their participation in sessions of the Commission — such as information on the NGO annual consultation meeting and other NGO events. The Division's web site also includes an electronic registration form.

34. The Division's increased interaction with non-governmental organizations has resulted in greater participation of those organizations in the Commission on the Status of Women. The NGO section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Non-Governmental Liaison Service, and the Civil Society Service of the Department of Public Information have been partners in these efforts. The forty-fifth session of the Commission, in March 2001, was attended by 653 NGO representatives, and 129 side events sponsored by Governments, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations were held. During the forty-sixth session of the Commission, in March 2002, 700 NGO representatives attended and 109 side events were held. At the forty-seventh session, in March 2003, 684 NGOs representatives were registered and a total of 137 side events were organized. The Bureau of the Commission met with representatives of non-governmental organizations prior to the forty-seventh session. The Division should continue the practice of supporting organizational arrangements that will make the presentation of NGO positions useful to the work of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

35. As a result of developments in the Secretariat highlighting the importance of meaningful interaction between the United Nations and civil society, the Office of the Special Adviser and the Division for the Advancement of Women had planned to review the strategic directions of their outreach activities in order to increase their range and impact. The review was completed early in 2003 and work plans are being formulated accordingly.

36. It is the view of the Office of Internal Oversight Services that significant progress was achieved in implementing recommendation 10 (a).

III. Conclusions

37. The advancement of women programme has implemented or taken steps to implement the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination and a number of results are already in evidence. For example, the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which reviews reports of State parties, has become more efficient and the backlog of reports awaiting review has decreased considerably. This is due, in part, to the adoption of temporary measures which have enabled the Committee to hold additional meetings and which have allowed States parties on an exceptional basis to combine several overdue reports in a single document. In 2002, the Committee adopted a longer-term strategy to improve the timely submission of States parties' reports and reduce the number of overdue reports, which included a request for a study by the Division for the Advancement of Women of non-reporting States parties.

38. Inter-agency coordination, communication and information have been enhanced, including the sharing of work plans and strategies through the work of task forces of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality. The annual Inter-Agency Network meeting has been extended to allow more time for discussions and an Inter-Agency Network web site was created. Coordination between the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Division for the Advancement of Women and other entities of the Secretariat has continued to focus on implementing strategies for gender mainstreaming. The technical assistance function of the Division has become more aligned with its analytical and normative work and is being coordinated more closely with the regional commissions and other United Nations agencies such as UNDP, UNIFEM and UNFPA and INSTRAW.

39. There has been good collaboration between the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Department of Public Information for the marketing and sales of Division publications. However, to identify material with publishing potential, consultations with the Sales and Marketing Section of the Department of Public Information would be more effective if they were initiated during the formulation stage of the publications programme.

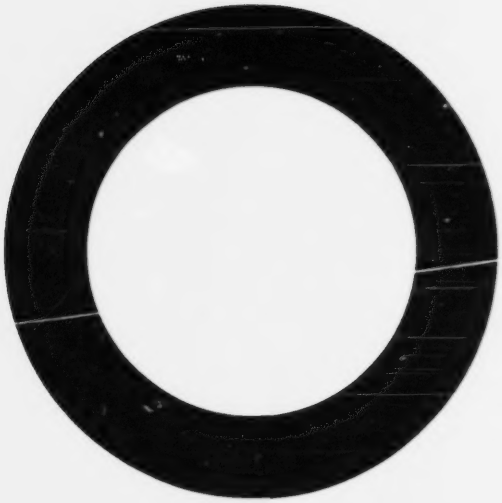
40. Assessments of the programme web sites, the WomenWatch and Division for the Advancement of Women web sites, were conducted and both sites had improved and as a result both sites are providing more up-to-date information on the programme. The WomenWatch web site was redesigned to function more as a portal to United Nations gender resources, with a large number of links to online gender resources of United Nations organizations. Two additional web sites, the Special Adviser's and the Inter-Agency Network's, were created in 2002 and are accessible from the portal. Several online discussions were organized during the period and the reports resulting from those discussions served as background papers for the meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women.

41. The efforts of the Division to facilitate the work of non-governmental organizations have resulted in an increase in the number of NGOs attending the sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women. The programme web sites have also provided a mechanism for interaction with non-governmental

organizations. While the Division continues to provide substantive and procedural briefings to non-governmental organizations on the work of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, it should continue to review the effectiveness of the organizational arrangements for the presentation of NGO positions to these intergovernmental bodies.

42. **The follow-up of recommendations in progress should be reported by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in the context of the programme performance report for the biennium 2004-2005, under the framework of results and self-evaluation reporting.**

(*Signed*) Dileep **Nair**
Under-Secretary-General
for Internal Oversight Services



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Item 5 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Coordination questions: New Partnership for Africa's Development

Future engagement of the United Nations system with the New Partnership for Africa's Development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report responds to the request by the Committee for Programme and Coordination for a report on the future engagement of United Nations system with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). General Assembly resolution 57/7 of 4 November 2002 provides the strategic guidance on the nature and scope of United Nations system support to NEPAD.

The United Nations system has developed an operational framework to support NEPAD organized in three tiers: national, regional and global. The report describes the operational framework as elaborated in the report of the Secretary-General on the evaluation of NEPAD (A/57/156 and Corr.1), and the progress in its further development over the past year. The regional consultative meeting of United Nations agencies working in Africa, convened by the Economic Commission for Africa, is the mechanism for cooperation and coordination among the agencies of the United Nations system at the regional level. The regional consultative meeting is organizing its activities around five thematic clusters, broadly corresponding to the priorities of NEPAD. The NEPAD secretariat has been actively involved in the work of the regional consultations and clusters, both as a way of providing validation to the orientation of the collective efforts of the agencies, and of ensuring that they are demand-driven.

* E/AC.51/2003/1.

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At the same time, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) is providing oversight and policy guidance to the agencies. Support for NEPAD has been on the agenda of CEB since 2001. The new Office of the Special Adviser on Africa will assist the Secretary-General in the coordination of global advocacy and support to NEPAD.

The effort by the United Nations system is a work in progress. The scope and approach of activities of the United Nations system will be reviewed and refined as progress is made in the implementation of NEPAD.

I. Introduction

1. At its forty-second session, the Committee for Programme and Coordination underlined the need for agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).[1] The Committee recommended that the United Nations system articulate a strategic operational framework for supporting the implementation of NEPAD.

2. The Committee also emphasized that it should be involved in monitoring whatever framework the agencies adopted to support NEPAD and recommended that the Secretary-General be requested to report to the Committee on the future engagement of the United Nations system with NEPAD at its forty-third session. The present report responds to that request of the Committee, which was endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 57/282 of 20 December 2002.

3. It bears emphasizing that in his report on the independent evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (A/57/156 and Corr.1), the Secretary-General had, in response to resolution 56/218 of 21 December 2001, advanced some proposals on the modalities of the United Nations future engagement with NEPAD. The present report highlights some of those proposals that were presented to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session for the deliberations on NEPAD which culminated in the adoption of resolution 57/7 of 4 November 2002.

II. Role of the United Nations system as mandated by the General Assembly

4. In its resolution 57/7, the General Assembly provided guidance on what the international community, including the United Nations system, should do in support of NEPAD. As reflected in paragraphs 24 to 33 in that resolution, the tasks set out for the United Nations system can be classified into seven broad categories, namely:

(a) Aligning their activities with the priorities of NEPAD;

(b) Strengthening advocacy and public information activities in support of NEPAD;

(c) Fostering coherence among themselves, including organizing their activities around thematic clusters at the regional level and working in close collaboration with bilateral donors;

(d) Strengthening further their existing coordination and programming mechanisms at the national level as a means of enhancing their support for NEPAD;

(e) Working closely with the African Union (AU) and other regional and subregional organizations to ensure the implementation of NEPAD;

(f) Continuing to support the efforts of African countries to build human and institutional capacity and mobilization of financial resources for Africa's development;

(g) Simplification and harmonization of the planning, programming, reporting and disbursement procedures of the United Nations system and for the multilateral institutions to ensure that their support was compatible with NEPAD.

5. That resolution, thus, provides the framework for coherence and actions by the entities of the United Nations system in their engagement with NEPAD. It is axiomatic that the guidance offered in that resolution would be updated in the future and supplemented as appropriate by the decisions of the legislative organs or boards of each agency or organization of the United Nations system.

6. The Secretary-General in his report on the evaluation of NEPAD (A/57/156 and Corr.1) noted that the support by the United Nations system for NEPAD would be organized at the national, regional and global levels. A three-tier operational framework is thus in place to help in the implementation of NEPAD. The present report describes the operational framework and the activities during the past year.

7. One important feature of the United Nations operational framework is that it seeks to support the implementation of NEPAD, while respecting the ownership of the process by African countries themselves.

Response of the United Nations system

A. Country level

8. The institutional mechanisms for organizing support for NEPAD will take different forms at each level. At the national level, the main framework will be the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the common country assessments, which will be complemented, as appropriate, by the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, where they exist. The United Nations system will use these existing programming and coordination tools as the main mechanisms for engaging with African Governments in support of the implementation of NEPAD as well as the millennium development goals.

9. Progress has been slow in setting up national structures and plans for the implementation of NEPAD by African Governments as well as in promoting United Nations support at the national level. However, it is pertinent to note that the 2002 reports of the resident coordinators included the results of United Nations support to national efforts to implement the millennium development goals, most of which are also the goals of NEPAD. In addition, a number of resident coordinators are providing support for the setting up of multi-stakeholders' forums to discuss the implementation of NEPAD.

B. Regional level

10. At the regional level, the regional consultative meetings of the United Nations agencies working in Africa and chaired by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) constitute the framework for coordination and collaboration among the entities of the United Nations system in support in NEPAD.

11. The regional consultative meeting of United Nations agencies working in Africa at its fourth session convened in October 2002 established five clusters under the convenership of the following agencies:

(a) Infrastructure development: water and sanitation, energy, transport and information and communications technologies, ECA;

(b) Governance, peace and security, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);

(c) Agriculture, trade and market access, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO);

(d) Environment, population and urbanization, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat);

(e) Human resource development, employment and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The cluster approach is a vehicle for coordinated response by the United Nations system, designed to enable agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to pool their efforts in support of NEPAD. All clusters have met at least once since October 2002. The NEPAD secretariat participated in all cluster meetings except those on human resource development, and co-convened the cluster on governance, peace and security. A summary of the recent actions by each of these clusters is detailed herewith.

1. Infrastructure development

12. The infrastructure cluster deals with issues of water and sanitation, energy, transport and information and communications technologies. The sub-cluster on energy aims to operationalize the African Energy Commission and to help member States to provide an enabling environment for attracting investors. A briefing on the Commission's approach for developing an Africa Energy Information System was given at a workshop on energy statistics organized in Addis Ababa from 10 to 13 December 2002. The Convention of the African Energy Commission was also distributed for countries to sign and ratify.

13. The sub-cluster on water and sanitation met and agreed: (a) that the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa water cluster would be merged with the Interagency Group for Water in Africa and renamed the UN Water-Africa, to be consistent with the Subcommittee on Water Resources; (b) to issue a brochure at Kyoto during the Third World Water Forum announcing the bi-annual Africa Water Development Report, which is in progress; (c) to establish an African water information clearing house on water resources in Africa and to support the development of the Africa Water Development Report; (d) to organize in December 2003 a Pan African Implementation and Partnership Conference to mark the end of the International Year of Freshwater; (e) to allocate responsibility among participating agencies and to identify focal points in each to follow up on implementing the above plan using a task manager system; and (f) to relaunch the UN Water-Africa on 22 March 2003 from Addis Ababa and Kyoto.

14. The sub-cluster on transport is to assist in implementing the Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Programme and in liberalizing access to air transport markets in Africa in accordance with the Yamoussoukro decisions. ECA and the World Bank, in cooperation with other partners, have developed a long-term plan of the Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Programme, which will be adopted during the General Meeting of the Programme being convened in Kigali in May 2003. A donors' meeting was organized at Brussels in December 2002 by ECA, the World Bank and the European Union to discuss the long-term plan and to seek contributions from

partners. ECA and the African Development Bank (ADB) have carried out a study on the assessment of the Trans African Highways, which was peer reviewed in Addis Ababa on 30 and 31 January 2003 by all stakeholders, including the Government, the private sector, the users, the operators and the regional economic communities. With regard to air transport, ECA and the World Bank helped the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) to organize a ministerial meeting for West and Central Africa from 25 to 28 February 2003 to consider an action plan for implementing the economic regulatory and safety oversight programmes. The plan was adopted and the World Bank and ECA will evaluate the Bank-supported capacity-building programmes for air transport at ECOWAS and CEMAC.

15. Activities undertaken under the information and communications technologies' sub-cluster include the development of national and regional information and communication infrastructure plans, policies and strategies in the framework of the African Information Society Initiative, the Partnership for Information and Communication Technology in Africa, the United Nations Information and Communications Technologies Task Force, the African Stakeholders Network, the Group of Eight Digital Opportunity Task Force network and the World Summit on Information Society. The NEPAD short-term action plan on information and communications technologies is used by the members of the sub-cluster for coordination with their own programmes and projects.

16. Members of the information and communications technologies cluster have agreed to the following group of activities as the basis for cooperation: (a) infrastructure projects: the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Comtel Corporation, ECOWAS Regional Interconnection, SAT-3/WASC/SAFE, the Remote Astronomy Software Component Object Model, and the Southern African Development Community regional information infrastructure; (b) enabling environment: development of telecommunications equipment manufacturing in Africa, information and communications technologies policy and regulatory framework, broadening and enhancing Africa's participation in the global information and communications technologies policy and decision-making forums, the information and communications technologies human resource capacity development initiative for Africa, and strengthening of African telecommunications and information and communications technologies institutions; and (c) sectoral applications and content: scan information and communications technologies and e-readiness, the electronic governance initiative, the electronic commerce and trade initiative, the African regional telemedicine initiative, and the Africa content development promotion initiative. The meeting noted that many of these activities require further discussions among the United Nations agencies and with the NEPAD Steering Committee.

17. To advance implementation of the infrastructure action plan, the following steps will be taken: (a) reorganize the action plan by region and sector; (b) organize regional and subregional meetings on the financing of the infrastructure programme; and (c) define the role of each partner involved in implementing the NEPAD infrastructure programme. The United Nations system agencies will consult with regional economic communities and member States to develop future priority areas for cooperation, including implementing the Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Programme and the Yamoussoukro decisions. With the assistance of ADB,

implementation benchmarks and targets for the infrastructure programme will be prepared before the end of June 2003 and distributed to all agencies.

2. **Governance, peace and security**

18. The cluster on governance, peace and security will develop joint programmes to support the African Peer Review Mechanism and the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa. In addition, the report of the AU Commission and the NEPAD secretariat consultations on peace and security that took place in Addis Ababa on 17 and 18 February 2003 will form the basis for identifying additional areas for joint actions by the agencies in the cluster. UNDP, in consultation with the AU Commission, the NEPAD secretariat and other United Nations agencies, will develop specific programmes and report to the next cluster meeting. A set of activities as an initial basis for joint action by the United Nations agencies, the AU Commission and the NEPAD secretariat has also been agreed upon. These are: (a) deepening institutional interaction with the AU Commission and the NEPAD secretariat through periodic consultations and support to technical meetings and workshops; (b) as an instrument for promoting good governance in Africa, UNDP, in collaboration with NEPAD and other United Nations agencies, will prepare strategy documents, convene a high-level workshop in May 2003, and organize the sixth Africa Governance Forum by December 2003; (c) enhancing institutional support to the NEPAD secretariat through funding and expertise to the UNDP/NEPAD support programme; (d) country-level promotion of NEPAD-millennium development goals, including population and gender; and (e) building capacity for the AU/ NEPAD peace and security agenda in AU regional organizations.

19. The cluster has also endorsed the proposal of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for the establishment of a standard humanitarian recovery framework incorporating the concept of repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction, as the overarching framework for institutional collaboration in implementing reintegration and recovery operations. It is thought that such a proposal would form part of future peace agreements. UNHCR, as the lead agency for this sub-cluster, was tasked to develop specific proposals, incorporating modalities of engagement between countries and the United Nations system, to review past and current programmes, to identify priority areas and to identify pilot countries based on agreed criteria for joint assessment missions and pilot programmes. This will be undertaken in close consultation with other United Nations agencies, as well as the Department of Political Affairs, the Department for Peacekeeping Operations and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat.

20. The cluster members agreed that UNDP, UNHCR and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in collaboration with the AU Commission/NEPAD secretariat would assume the primary role of coordination, scheduling and preparation of the work plans of the cluster. Proposed joint programmes under each sub-cluster will be prepared by the members of the bureau in close consultation with the AU Commission, the NEPAD secretariat and other agencies, as well as the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Bretton Woods institutions, and presented to the next cluster meeting. For project monitoring and evaluation, the cluster will use existing United Nations

mechanisms at country and regional levels such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and the millennium development goals and gradually bring them into convergence with the AU-Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa and the NEPAD-African Peer Review Mechanism processes once fully developed. The new tripartite arrangement of co-convening the cluster with UNDP, the AU Commission and the NEPAD secretariat will be institutionalized for the governance, peace and security cluster, and will be considered by the other clusters.

3. Environment, population and urbanization

21. The cluster on environment, population and urbanization reviewed the environment component of NEPAD and its Framework Action Plan, which focuses on the following thematic areas: (a) combating land degradation, drought and desertification; (b) conserving Africa's wetlands; (c) preventing and controlling invasive species; (d) conserving and sustaining coastal and marine resources; (e) combating climate change; and (f) tackling cross-border conservation and natural resource management issues as they relate to freshwater, biodiversity, forest and plant genetic resources. The plan also addresses cross-cutting issues such as health and environment, poverty and environment, transfer of environmentally sound technologies and assessment and early warning for natural disasters. The cluster also reviewed the activities identified during earlier consultations among cluster members and agreed that for the next two years the cluster should concentrate its work on the following three thematic areas: sustainable NEPAD cities with UN-Habitat as the lead agency; data monitoring and evaluation of progress in the achievement of NEPAD goals in environment, population and urbanization, with UNFPA and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) as lead agencies; and development and implementation of the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the lead agency.

4. Human resource development, employment and HIV/AIDS

22. The cluster on human resource development, employment and HIV/AIDS identified two priority areas for collective action: HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases and education. It was also felt that employment issues needed to be better addressed in the NEPAD action plan.

23. The HIV/AIDS sub-cluster will focus on the following priorities: intensified advocacy for including HIV/AIDS in the development agenda for African States; integration of HIV/AIDS in bilateral and other donor programmes; mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into all NEPAD sectoral programmes; support for countries to integrate HIV/AIDS in sector policies and programmes; and support for the NEPAD secretariat to establish a monitoring and evaluation system capable of tracking progress and measuring the performance of its HIV/AIDS related programmes.

24. As regards HIV/AIDS advocacy, the activities undertaken thus far include: convening of a NEPAD mapping project meeting in Addis Ababa in collaboration with the Centre for Global Studies and ECA on 27 and 28 February 2003; first annual report on HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in Africa: work on the report in cooperation with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)/ECA, AU and the World Health Organization (WHO) is in progress; HIV/AIDS and governance: work on HIV/AIDS and governance/leadership has led

to the new commission on HIV/AIDS and governance in Africa supported by the Secretary-General and ECA. Several agencies contributed to the experts' meeting convened by ECA.

25. Various agencies are supporting the follow-up work to the third African Development Forum, held in March 2002: mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in the work of AU and the regional economic communities in Africa in the framework of Africa's regional integration, and the African Centre for Gender and Development organized a regional workshop on gender and HIV/AIDS in Africa. Expanding the work on HIV/AIDS and gender in development planning is in progress. The regional programme on gender and HIV/AIDS is supported by ECA and UNDP. As part of the efforts to strengthen NEPAD interface with the regional economic communities, WHO, in consultations with other United Nations agencies, is facilitating the establishments of health desks with the regional economic communities. WHO has also taken the lead in assisting in drafting the NEPAD health strategy paper, which will be considered at the next cluster meeting.

26. As a follow-up to the Abuja Declaration, AU, UNAIDS, WHO, UNICEF and other partners have developed a mechanism for monitoring implementation of the plan of action for combating HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other related infectious diseases. This process is ongoing and aims to develop a clear continental monitoring of national implementation programmes. Countries are also linking this mechanism to their commitments made at the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly.

27. There has been extensive work to support countries in incorporating the HIV/AIDS dimension in their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. This effort has been streamlined to create a shared understanding of the relationship between HIV/AIDS and poverty and development.

28. In the education sector, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) are still reviewing the modalities for developing programmes to support NEPAD objectives. In furtherance of this, a joint UNESCO-NEPAD seminar on education for all, entitled "From Vision to Action", was organized at Ouagadougou from 3 to 8 March 2003. Most agencies concerned with education participated. In addition, a publication entitled *Young Faces of NEPAD* is being jointly published by ECA/UNICEF/AU/NEPAD. It focuses on the priority areas identified by the Secretary-General on education and HIV/AIDS and the need for fast-track implementation.

29. AU organized the first African Union Western Hemisphere Diaspora Forum at Washington, D. C. in December 2002. The Forum examined the relationship between the diaspora and Africa; the brain drain and its effect on the continent; and the cost of Western technical assistance estimated at US$ 4 billion every year. The International Organization on Migration (IOM) provided technical support, with other United Nations agencies participating. The Forum decided that IOM should take the lead in setting up an African database for all African countries and in collecting information on diaspora professionals from all major fields; assist the working groups towards developing an action plan; participate in the annual follow-up meeting to assess progress made in implementing the recommendations; work with co-coordinating teams being established in Washington, D.C. and Addis Ababa.

and participate in the Internet-based networking and discussion groups being created to follow up on the recommendations.

5. Agriculture, trade and market access

30. Recently, FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and WFP entered into a memorandum of understanding entitled: "Working Together to Fight Hunger and Poverty". Under this institutional arrangement, the agencies have undertaken a number of joint activities in Africa, including projects focusing on: (a) sustained improvements in food production and farm incomes with a view to fighting hunger and poverty in Angola; and (b) boosting cassava production and promoting cassava technologies for greater food security in Africa. In addition, the Rome-based agencies have formal working arrangements with the other United Nations agencies.

31. The NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and the NEPAD Market Access Initiative, which includes a strategic plan and an action programme on market access, formed the basis for the cluster support to NEPAD. Regarding the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, in December 2002, FAO cooperated with ADB and NEPAD to convene a meeting at Abuja that resulted in a declaration and an action plan. Cluster agencies are being encouraged to assist in the follow up.

32. With regard to market access, the strategic plan is based on three broad pillars: (a) building and strengthening the capacity to negotiate trade agreements; (b) strengthening the compliance capacity of African countries; and (c) supply capacity and competitiveness of African States and their enterprises.

33. Capacity-building assistance will concentrate on helping African countries to develop and implement forward-looking trade policy within a coherent macroeconomic framework. To this end, a joint-effort is envisaged by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, UNCTAD, WTO, ECA and FAO, among others. Regarding markets access strategies, UNCTAD, ECA, WTO and the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC) will take the lead in assisting NEPAD. With respect to trade negotiations, assistance will focus on improving trade negotiation skills of African trade negotiators; enlarging the cadre of African negotiators and increasing interaction among them. ITC, UNCTAD, WTO and ECA will lead the technical assistance work with the participation of FAO and IFAD. Agencies, including the World Bank, ITC, UNIDO, FAO, WTO and UNCTAD, will assist in the development of an export-oriented private sector to generate sustainable economic growth and reduce poverty.

34. With regard to strengthening the compliance capacity of African countries, ITC, UNCTAD, WTO and FAO will assist African countries to manage trade policies and institutions in order to comply with various arrangements, conventions and treaties.

35. Concerning supply-capacity and competitiveness, agencies will assist African countries to expand, diversify and enhance the technological content of the export supply base in commodities and goods and services where these countries have long-term comparative advantage in regional and global markets.

36. The following activities are planned: NEPAD, in cooperation with United Nations agencies, is developing an agriculture action plan. Following its

preparation, the cluster on agriculture, trade and market access will collaborate to support the formulation of programmes and projects at the national and regional level for funding by Africa and its partners. The Government of Senegal is hosting an African ministerial conference on commodities at Dakar in June/July 2003. UNCTAD and the Common Fund for Commodities are assisting in the organization of the conference. The cluster agencies are expected to participate. UNIDO and UNCTAD are organizing two regional seminars for East and West Africa in April and June 2003 on the integration of least developed countries in global trade: challenges and opportunities from the Doha Development Agenda (see A/C.2/56/7, annex). Case studies on good practices for market access will be identified.

C. Global level

37. The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), the main mechanism for inter-agency consultation and coordination, and its High-Level Committee on Programme, have kept the issue of Africa's development high on their agenda. CEB has consistently supported initiatives taken by Africa to accelerate the continent's development especially in the framework of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. Accordingly, it has extended its full support for NEPAD at the global level, and has taken steps to ensure that the United Nations system acts in a coherent and coordinated manner to strengthen the NEPAD framework. CEB has agreed to strengthen inter-agency coordination, especially at the regional level in order to support the efforts of the African countries themselves. CEB and the High-Level Committee on Programme also regularly review policy guidelines designed to maintain the United Nations system's engagement in Africa, and periodically assess the progress of the work of the entities of the United Nations system to advance the objectives and goals of NEPAD.

38. To enable the United Nations system to have a clearer focus on the particular needs of NEPAD for inter-agency collaboration, it has designated ECA to coordinate inter-agency support to NEPAD at the regional level, and stressed the importance of networking and information-sharing among concerned organizations of the system to support the role of ECA. In that capacity, the Executive Secretary of ECA provides briefings to CEB on the progress of NEPAD at the CEB biannual meetings, the most recent of which was held in New York on 8 and 9 November 2002.

39. In its resolution 57/7, the General Assembly underscored the need for a structure in the Secretariat in New York, at the appropriate level, which would review and report on support provided by the United Nations system and the international community for NEPAD and on the coordinated implementation of outcomes of summit meetings and conferences as they relate to Africa as well as to coordinate global advocacy in support of NEPAD.

40. In response to that resolution and as part of the recent reforms, the Secretary-General is in the process of establishing the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa as the structure at the Secretariat in New York that will provide global support to NEPAD. The office will also assist the Secretary-General in coordination of global advocacy for NEPAD.

IV. Resource mobilization

41. Mobilizing financial resources for the implementation of NEPAD is a major priority for African countries as well as for the United Nations system. The actions of the agencies of the United Nations system in this regard are based on a number of principles. First and foremost, Africa must assume the primary responsibility in mobilizing resources for implementing the NEPAD agenda. In addition, efforts to mobilize resources from the donor community, including multinational corporations operating in Africa, should be led by the AU Commission/NEPAD secretariat with the support of United Nations agencies. Furthermore, duplication and overlap of project funding should be addressed and emphasis should be placed on a programme approach to resource mobilization.

42. Nevertheless, the United Nations system agencies should continue to take steps to align their activities with the priorities of NEPAD as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/7. In this regard, the programmes presented to their respective governing bodies, as well as those prepared for extrabudgetary funding, should reflect their planned individual and collective activities at the country, subregional and regional levels, in support of AU/NEPAD. These should also include budgetary provisions for identification of activities, as well as for project programme design and development.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

43. The implementation of NEPAD is a work in progress. So also is the engagement of the United Nations system with NEPAD. The United Nations system has demonstrated a strong commitment and desire to adopt a coherent framework, based on existing programming and coordination mechanisms, to support NEPAD at the national, regional and global levels.

44. This first report has explained the guidance provided by the General Assembly to the United Nations system, described the framework for the engagement of the United Nations system with NEPAD and highlighted the evolving nature and scope of activities being undertaken by the United Nations system to organize itself to provide support to NEPAD. Taken together, these would provide the basis for monitoring by CPC of the support of the United Nations system to NEPAD. The United Nations system would review and refine its framework and activities as the process of implementing of NEPAD moves forward. The active involvement of the NEPAD secretariat and the African Union Commission at virtually every stage of the United Nations system's support to NEPAD augurs well for the idea of partnership embodied in NEPAD.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/57/16), para. 337.